



## A CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG THE EMPLOYEES IN AN ORGANISATION

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### **Abstract**

*Knowledge sharing is now being seen as the most important strategic resources in an organization. Most companies realize that knowledge sharing will give value to the organization. Knowledge can be used for learning new things, solving problems and initiating new situations for both individual and organizations. The sharing of knowledge constitutes a major challenge in the field of knowledge management because some employees tend to resist sharing their knowledge with the rest of the organization. Knowledge sharing activities are generally supported by knowledge management systems. In an organization Knowledge sharing is identified as an important tool to improve business performance. It involves the exchange of employee knowledge, experiences and skills in an organization. Knowledge sharing occurs at the individual and organizational levels. Knowledge sharing for an individual is to discuss with colleagues, done something better more quickly and effectively. For an organization, knowledge sharing is capturing, organizing, transferring and making that knowledge available to others in the business. However even when individuals give the highest priority to the interests of the organization and of their community, they tend to shy away from contributing knowledge for a variety of reasons. Finally this study explains knowledge sharing, process, Importance, Benefits, and knowledge sharing among individuals in an organization.*

**Keywords:** *Knowledge Creation, Knowledge Transfer, Explicit Knowledge, Tacit Knowledge.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Knowledge sharing is the exchange of knowledge between and among individuals, and within and among teams, organizational units, and organizations. An exchange of knowledge between two individuals is one who communicates knowledge and one who assimilates it. In knowledge sharing, the focus is on human capital and the interaction between individuals.

Knowledge sharing is a systematic process for creating, acquiring, synthesizing, learning, sharing and using knowledge and experience to achieve organisational goal. The biggest challenge for knowledge sharing is each time employees leave their job; they carry what they shared among them. If they share their knowledge among employees it ensures that the employees' knowledge stay around long after the employees leaves the company. The ultimate goal of Knowledge Sharing is to distribute the right content to right people at right time. Shared knowledge not only makes more effective and efficient organization, but creates a common perspective to take successful decisions and actions. Many people say that sharing knowledge is important to the organisation success. Knowledge sharing is considered an important factor related to the ability of both employees and organizations to respond quickly to a changing business environment. By sharing your knowledge, you gain more than you lose. Sharing knowledge is a synergistic process you get more out than you put in. It refers to "activities of transferring or disseminating knowledge from one person, group, or organization to another." Some people object to sharing as they feel that others will steal their ideas and reap the rewards rightly theirs. Knowledge sharing isn't about blindly sharing everything; giving away your own ideas; thoughts, or being open about everything.

### **REVIEW OF LITREATURE**

According to **Dyer and Nobeoka's (2000)** knowledge sharing as activities aimed at helping communities of people work together, facilitating the exchange of their knowledge, enabling learning orientation, and increasing the ability to achieve individual and organizational goals.

**Bock and Kim (2002)** discussed the idea that, if employees believed they could make contributions to the organization's performance, they would develop a more positive attitude toward knowledge sharing.

**Van DerBij et al (2003)** stated that Knowledge has been viewed as a competitive advantage and a source of power for those who possess it at the right place and at the right time.

**Ryu et al (2003)** defined knowledge sharing as the behavior of an individual dispersing his or her obtained knowledge and information to other colleagues within an organization.

**Van Den Hoofs and De Ridder (2004)** explained knowledge sharing is donating and knowledge receiving is collecting combined those two perspectives and name them as knowledge collecting and knowledge donating. While knowledge donating concern with communicating to others what one's personal intellectual capital is, knowledge collecting is related to consulting colleagues in order to get them to share their intellectual capital.

**Yang and Wu (2008)** defined the specific knowledge could enjoy some benefits and unique positions, which might be lost by sharing that knowledge. Accordingly, knowledge sharing among individuals involves a social dilemma that is due to the complexity of interactions between people.

In accordance with **Mesmer-Magnus & De Church (2009)** knowledge sharing is positively related to reductions in production costs, faster completion of new product development projects, team performance, firm innovation capabilities, and firm performance including sales growth and revenue from new products and services.

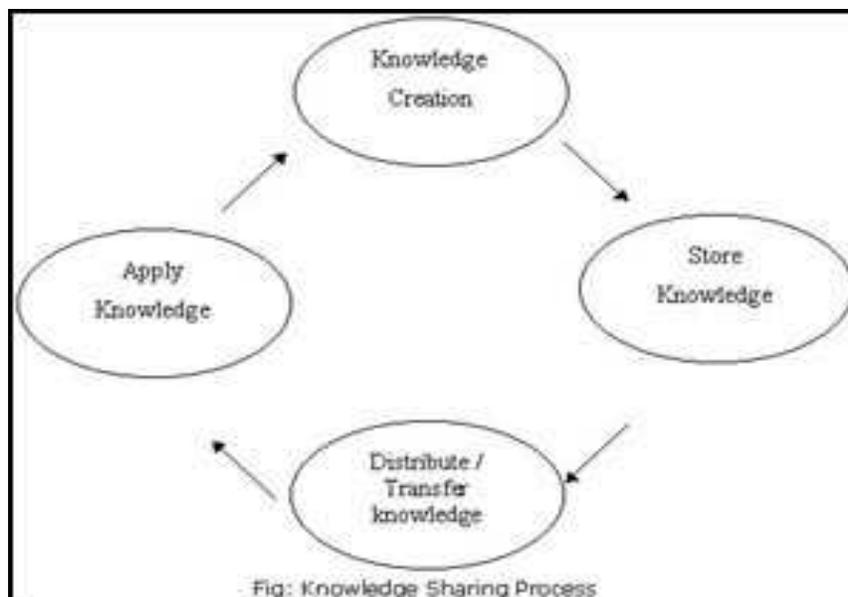
#### **KNOWLEDGE SHARING PLATFORMS**

Knowledge sharing has become an essential part of knowledge management. Here is some knowledge sharing platforms, which are being widely used by many organizations.

- **Team Meetings**  
Meetings are the one of the best ways and means of Knowledge sharing, where the people come together formally in order to discuss about the problems, projects, experiences, opinions and take decisions. In such meetings people express their opinions, express their knowledge about particular subject or topic, which enhances the knowledge of other participants.
- **Video Screening Sessions**  
It's an act of sharing a film / movie / and other programmes. The program usually contains case studies, past experiences etc. to achieve the objectives and their goals.
- **Training programmes**  
Training programs are the process of learning the skills, procedures, activities for a particular job or task. Training programs allow the trainees to interact with each other and also to interact with the trainers. In such programs trainer shares his knowledge with the trainees and trains them very well to do a particular job.
- **Conferences/Seminars**  
Organising a seminar or conference can be an effective way of raising the profile of your work or engaging with key stakeholders. A conference allows the people to discuss their views. The people come to conference to learn. It can be an opportunity to share and exchange their views with other experts in their field. Knowledge can be shared person-to-person during presentations or meetings.

#### **KNOWLEDGE SHARING PROCESS**

Knowledge sharing is supported with different goals, in mind; to acquire knowledge, to reuse knowledge, and to develop new knowledge. The most important success factor for knowledge-sharing is the degree to which it is bound up in the day-to-day operations of an organizations .When knowledge sharing processes become institutionalized it suggest that all those involved in the organization consider knowledge sharing to be a crucial part of their daily work. At that point knowledge sharing becomes routine instead of just another task.



**Fig :knowledge Sharing Process**

### **Knowledge Creation**

Knowledge is created through practice, collaboration, interaction, and education. Knowledge creation always begins with an individual or a group of individuals, who individually or as a group come up with new ideas, concepts, product or process innovations etc. Knowledge creation may occur through research, innovation projects, experimentation and observation. Knowledge workers are people who create, use and disseminate knowledge.

### **Store Knowledge**

Knowledge repository tools form the basis for storing and retrieving vast quantities of business intelligence or previous information, which can subsequently be used to form the basis for future predictions. Knowledge stored in the minds of organisational participant which has been acquired and retained by groups or teams and that which is embedded in the business processes.

### **Transfer Knowledge**

Knowledge Sharing enables the communication of knowledge from one person to another so that it can be used by the other person. Knowledge transfer is especially beneficial to an organisation's competitive advantage. It includes a variety of interactions between individuals and groups; within, between, and across groups; and from groups to the organization. Once Knowledge is transferred to, or shared with, others, it may be utilised through elaboration in order to be helpful in facilitating innovation, individual learning and collaborative problem solving.

### **Apply the Knowledge**

Apply what knowledge you have learnt in order to innovate. Applying knowledge to make the best decisions requires the best communications, learning, knowledge strategies and techniques.

### **FIVE WAYS TO ENCOURAGE KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN AN ORGANISATION**

If people understand that sharing their knowledge helps them do their jobs more effectively; helps them retain their jobs; helps them in their personal development and career progression; rewards them for getting things done and brings more personal recognition, then knowledge sharing will become a reality.

To get most things done in an organisation today requires a collaborative effort. If you try to work alone – you are likely to fail – you need the input from other people their support being open with them, sharing with them, helps you to achieve your objectives.

It really helps people see for themselves that knowledge sharing is in their personal interest. The old paradigm was “knowledge is power”. Today it needs to be understood that “sharing knowledge is power”. Here are 5 ways to encourage knowledge sharing within the organisation.

- **Mentoring:** Each employee needs a mentor. Someone who can teach them the ropes, answer any questions they may have, and help them succeed within the organisation. The mentor should be someone who is willing to truly guide a mentee in the right direction.
- **Department vs individuals:** Seek out specific departments, not just individuals, when looking for a specific piece of information. They do say two heads are better than one, so utilize that in your knowledge-sharing efforts.
- **Trust:** Without trust you have nothing. It is the foundation for any type of functional relationship. If you do not trust your co-workers, you will not be willing to share your very valuable knowledge, which just makes for an unhealthy environment.
- **Rewards:** Reward your employees for contributing valuable knowledge. Recognition is the number one way to satisfy an employee. Here rewards means motivating for knowledge sharing between the employees in an organisation.
- **Implement Good Collaboration Tools:** The right tool makes all the difference, and companies with healthy collaboration are far more successful. The management should empower and recognize innovative employees, to measure and stimulate creative activity and to promote a more open and collaborative innovation culture in the organization.

## **BENEFITS OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

An effective knowledge sharing program should help a company do one or more of the following:

1. Foster innovation by encouraging the free flow of ideas.
2. Help in understanding markets and customers.
3. Development of product and services.
4. Development of vision and strategies.
5. Building competencies.
6. Improve customer service by streamlining response time.
7. Boost revenues by getting products and services to market faster.
8. Enhance employee retention rates by recognizing the value of employee's knowledge and rewarding them for it.

## **TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

### **Explicit Knowledge**

Explicit knowledge is formal and systematic. It can be easily communicated and shared. It is therefore fairly easy to identify, store, and retrieve. This is the type of knowledge most easily handled by Knowledge Management System, which are very effective at facilitating the storage, retrieval, and modification of documents and texts.

From a managerial perspective, the greatest challenge with explicit knowledge is similar to information. It involves ensuring that people have access to what they need; that important knowledge is stored; and that the knowledge is reviewed, updated, or discarded. Explicit knowledge exists in the form of words, sentences, documents, computer programs and in other explicit forms.

### **Tacit Knowledge**

Tacit knowledge on the other hand, is not so easily expressed. It is highly personal, hard to formalize and difficult to communicate to others. It may also be impossible to capture. It is also regarded as being the most valuable source of knowledge, and the most likely to lead to breakthroughs in the organization. Knowledge Management System has a very hard time handling this type of knowledge. Tacit knowledge is not easily shared.

In the field of knowledge management, the concept of tacit knowledge refers to a knowledge possessed only by an individual and difficult to communicate to others via words and symbols. Therefore, an individual can acquire

tacit knowledge without language. Tacit knowledge is found in the minds of human stakeholders. It includes cultural beliefs, values, attitudes etc.

### **FACTORS INFLUENCING KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

Factors affecting knowledge sharing are exclusively important; here four major factors that influence Knowledge sharing are identified. They are

- **The Nature of Knowledge**  
Depending on the nature of the job and the employee's experience, it may be appropriate to offer assistance in a variety of ways. When valuable knowledge is shared, the companies are suspicious and do not engage in sharing of valuable knowledge unless they receive something in return.
- **The Motivation to Share**  
The motivation to share knowledge includes the nature of the relationship between the management, and the rewards that are received for sharing knowledge. In the knowledge-based era, how to motivate employees to share their knowledge is the most difficult activity of knowledge management. Especially the people are not likely to share knowledge without strong personal motivation. The management should motivate them to share their knowledge.
- **The Willingness to Share**  
Workers first needed to feel secure in their jobs they need to know that the act of sharing knowledge with their co-workers would not diminish their job in any way. Human resources departments believe that the incentive and performance management schemes they have put in place motivate their workers to share knowledge.
- **The Opportunity to Share**  
In an organisation the employees unable get a proper platform to express their views and ideas. Here the management should give the employee an opportunity to bring his or her performance up to an acceptable level. If the employee fails to improve to an acceptable level by the end of the opportunity period, further action is warranted.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study explains the commitment of the employees towards the organisation. Knowledge sharing provides huge business opportunities. However the implementation of knowledge sharing is not easy. Management must therefore implement the right processes, frameworks, and systems that enable knowledge sharing. A successful knowledge sharing will help the employees to achieve their objectives and also it will enable the organisation to improve its overall performance. Finally, knowledge must be shared in each and every organisation.

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