Chapter 12

Contextual Analysis of the Organizational Knowledge Systems in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Today digital information sources and digital records are an indispensable part of our personal and business environments. The basic components that affect information systems which are used as a means for productivity and efficiency in organizations are organization culture, organizational information management systems, the procedures for organizational work, and information technologies. This chapter aims to analyze the existing conditions of knowledge and communication systems in 118 organizations that take part in different service sectors in Turkey depending on the InterPARES 3 Project methodology and similar studies carried out in the field. Thus, it is intended to investigate where the conditions that affect the functioning of information systems adversely stem from, what kind of improvements need to be done and what the good and weak sides of the information systems are.
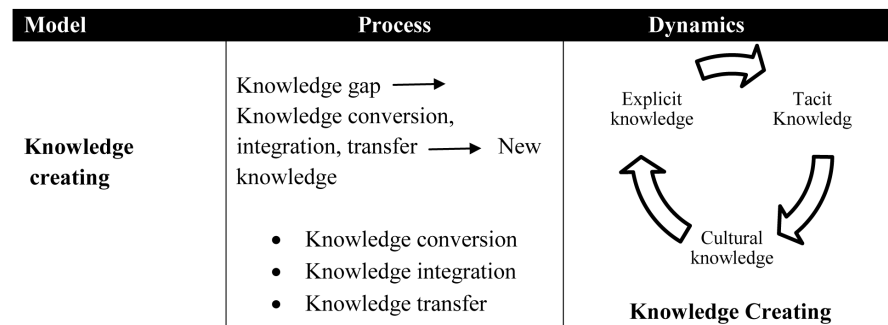
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Organizational success and efficiency are closely related to mutual and efficient functioning human resources, structural systems, user expectations, and organizational information and communication systems. In this structure, information and communication systems provide the tools and techniques necessary for management, monitoring, registration, supervision and assessment of the processes. Activation of organizational working processes is closely related to information sources and systems that enable the workflow (Ramezan, 2011, pp. 92-93).

In general terms, organizations are run on three types of information. Tacit knowledge refers to unwritten knowledge which is composed of individual knowledge and experiences. Explicit or defined knowledge is the type of written or printed knowledge which puts forth what should be done, how and in what procedures it should be done. As a third type, cultural knowledge consists of beliefs and norms of individuals and institu-

Figure 1. Knowledge creating

Model	Process	Dynamics
Knowledge creating	Knowledge gap ⟶ Knowledge conversion, integration, transfer ⟶ New knowledge • Knowledge conversion • Knowledge integration • Knowledge transfer	Explicit knowledge · Tacit Knowledg · Cultural knowledge **Knowledge Creating**

tions that affect the work and the process. In this framework, issues such as correct definition and efficient management of tacit, explicit or cultural knowledge, conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge come to the forefront (Choo & Bontis, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

Conversion of tacit knowledge into objective and open knowledge is formulized by Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI model (1995) and this approach has been one of the milestones of information science. SECI is the name of the model which is composed of the initials of socialization, externalization, combination and internalization. In this model, conversion of 'covert' knowledge into 'covert' knowledge is called 'socialization'; conversion of 'covert' knowledge into 'open' knowledge is called 'externalization'; sharing 'open' knowledge in the form of organizational open knowledge is called 'combination'; and conversion of open knowledge into covert knowledge is called 'internalization'. (see Figure 1)

As of 1990s, in particular, knowledge has turned out to be one of the most strategic sources in organizations. Knowledge production which will redefine the process in the domain of production and services or help them to improve their function plays a key role in the success of organizations in the competitive environment (Wang & Ahmed, 2003, p. 56). Today digital information sources and digital records are an indispensable part of our personal and business environments (Xie, 2012,

p.299). Organizations usually define information systems within IT technologies. Although the quality and accessibility of information is basically at the forefront, information systems are as important as the information itself. In this context, content analysis of the information produced and used need to be done, and technological platforms over which efficient information systems to be established after they are designed have to be described (Jones, 2012).

Another factor affecting efficiency in information systems of organizations is organizational culture. Organizational culture generally refers to beliefs, attitudes, predictions and expectations that could shape mutual behaviours and effects of people in an organization and often guide the work processes (Armstrong, 2009, p. 206; Pascale and Athos, 1981, p.10). Some of the characteristics of organizational culture can be listed as follows: It can be understood in an unwritten way; it is symbolic and holistic; it is adopted by the general community; and it reflects the higher authority (Akıncı & Bat, 2008; Newstrom & Davis, 1993, p. 59).

In this scope, the basic components that affect information systems which are used as a means for productivity and efficiency in organizations are structural conditions of the organization, information technologies and their management, unwritten norms and cultural factors.

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