

Chapter 93

A Comprehensive Relational Model of Factors Influencing Knowledge Sharing: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to get the main factors affecting knowledge sharing and their influencing route so that to promote knowledge implementation through theory analysis and empirical test. The paper collects almost all the factors that have significant influence on knowledge sharing from a large amount of relative researches, and classifies the effect of factors as direct, indirect, mediate and moderate effect. Based on the deep review and analysis, the paper selects top management support, organization culture, social relationship, attitude to knowledge sharing, self-efficacy, trust, motivation, intention to knowledge sharing, IT, and training as the major influential factors and proposes a comprehensive relational model according to the effects of the factors. Finally, the paper verifies the model and examines the effects of the factors by empirical test through the data collected from questionnaires. The findings can give some guidance to managers and scholars.

1. INTRODUCTION

It has been universally accepted that knowledge is the most valuable asset to help to maintain the competence of the organizations (Yajiong Xue, Huigang Liang et al., 2012; Omar E. M. Khalil, Timothy Shea, 2012). O'Dell and Jackson (1998) defined Knowledge Management as making the right people get needed knowledge

at the right time and helping people share and take information into action in ways that improve organization performance. Lee (2001) regards that Knowledge Management has four major processes: capturing, storing, sharing and using knowledge, and knowledge sharing is the major barrier to transforming individual knowledge into organizational knowledge (Yajiong Xue, Huigang Liang et al., 2012; Jinwoo Kima, Minyoung Kimb,

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& Mark-Oliver Stehr, 2012). So it attracts much attention from scholars and experts (Judith Welschen, Nelly Todorova, & Annette Mills, 2012; Viktoriya Galushko, & Richard Gray, 2012). Widely considered as a determinant of successful knowledge management, Knowledge sharing is a most important process of knowledge management (Yajiong Xue, Huigang Liang et al., 2012; Paul M. Di Gangi, Molly M. Wasko, & Xinlin Tang, 2012). Companies must keep enhancing their capabilities by knowledge sharing (Iris Reychav, Eric W. Stein, Jacob Weisberg, & Chanan Glezer, 2012). Maruta points out that people can get the needed knowledge from others by knowledge sharing, and may create new knowledge through knowledge combination (Iris Reychav, Eric W. Stein, Jacob Weisberg, & Chanan Glezer, 2012). Many researches stress the importance of knowledge sharing (Imed Boughzala, & Robert O. Briggs, 2012; Salih Yesil, 2013). Knowledge sharing and integration across different departments is a crucial capability for an organization to develop and sustain competitive advantages (Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay, & Valéry Psyché, 2012; Megan L. Endres, & Sanjib Chowdhury, 2013). Wei-Tsong Wang, Nai-Yuan Ko emphasize that knowledge sharing can lead to the whole company's advantage, through coordination and interaction between members which can enhance the problem solving ability (Wei-Tsong Wang, & Nai-Yuan Ko, 2012).

Knowledge sharing is a most effective approach to assist individuals and organizations to increase knowledge, capability, and competency. Therefore, in order to take good use of knowledge and manage knowledge properly, find the factors influencing knowledge sharing has become an essential theme in the knowledge management research field (Peng Lianga, & Anton Jansen, 2011; Ru-Chu Shih, & Shi-Jer Lou, 2011). Researchers have revealed that there are many complicated factors affecting knowledge sharing (Niels-Ingvar Boer, Hans Berends, & Peter van Baalen, 2011). Researchers have employed several theoretical frameworks,

including social exchange theory, social capital theory, social cognitive theory and the theory of reasoned action (TRA), motivation theory, theory of planned behavior (TPB; Cheolho Yoon, & Erik Rolland, 2012). For knowledge sharing can occur on different levels, for example between individuals, groups, departments and companies, many influencing factors have been discovered, such as the characteristics of knowledge and the properties of managerial actions, the environment and the company (Judith Welschen, Nelly Todorova, & Annette Mills, 2012). Jones (2005, 2006) declares that organization culture is an important influencing factor to the knowledge sharing by deep investigation (Zhen Shao, Yuqiang Feng, & Luning Liu, 2012). Lin (2008) identifies structure, culture and interaction as the three main organizational factors to facilitate the knowledge sharing within high-tech industry in Taiwan (Hung-Wen Lee, & Ching-Fang Yu, 2011). Brown and Duguid (2000) argue, organizational structures often contribute to less-than-perfect knowledge exchange across the boundaries of different structural entities (Megan L. Endres, & Sanjib Chowdhury, 2013). Kankanhalli et al. (2005) denotes that knowledge self-efficacy and enjoyment in helping others are intrinsic motivational factors affecting knowledge-sharing (Cheolho Yoon, & Erik Rolland, 2012). Mooradian et al. (2006) proposes that organization and managerial factors can influence people's intentions which directly lead to knowledge sharing behavior (Ming-Tien Tsai, Kun-Shiang Chen, & Jui-Lin Chien, 2012). Petrash (1996) put forward that mutual trust, loyalty, respect and obligation can generally lead to knowledge sharing (Hung-Wen Lee, & Ching-Fang Yu, 2011). Researches highlight the effects of trust, openness, social relationship and also emphasizes the effects and importance of organizational structure and culture (Stephen C. Shih, & Sonya H.Y. Hsu, 2012; Martin Friesl, Sonja A. Sackmann, & Sebastian Kremser, 2011). Lin (2007) concludes that motivational factors which are categorized as intrinsic and extrinsic significantly affect knowledge shar-

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