

Chapter 5

Governing Social Network Knowledge Activities: Knowledge Management Governance or Knowledge Governance

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge as an intangible asset can show flexibility and also be directed due to its context and path. The main concern of an organization's selected social network environment as a place for knowledge sharing and creation would be the suitable guidance of activities and ensuring alignment and adaption to organizational needs. Two main streams in the knowledge management domain address the concerns and give solutions: knowledge management governance (KMG) and knowledge governance (KG). Some researchers believe in the former and emphasize on managing the knowledge management programs in social network as a communication and information tool; while others believe that knowledge in social network as a virtual society (which has no strict formal relations) must be treated with flexibility and must be seen out of formal binding frameworks. In the latter, suitable policy making and engaging the right guidelines are the key points. It is obvious that no superiority can be considered for the two described streams and they may be preferred according to the mission and objectives of different social networks implemented in organizations. This chapter describes these two main streams and differentiates them according to their distinctions and similarities in the literature and available practices. The chapter gives insights to better understand the researching streams and their differences to find out the most suitable development policy for inner-organization social network knowledge management activities.

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge management has been in existence in modern organizations for over two decades with the aim of managing knowledge processes, including creation, storage, retrieving, and transfer and application (Nakamori, 2013). All growing organizations need to receive or create knowledge (Zyngier & Burstein,

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2012). Knowledge management has been rooted in management beliefs and is of great necessity for correct and suitable knowledge management. Although it has been years since knowledge management was introduced to the knowledge society, many researchers show that there are deep concerns about knowledge management within formal organizations. These beliefs are that if some fundamental constraints such as organizational frameworks, formal inter-personal relations, and organizational commitments get solved, some other issues underlying the concept of knowledge management may arise. Some researchers believe that flexibility and fluidity of knowledge show different perspectives of knowledge management concepts which are not limited to organizational borders (Wierzbicki & Nakamori, 2007; Tian, Nakamori, & Wierzbicki, 2009).

Although the value of knowledge in formal and inter-organization environments has been discussed widely, suitable applications of knowledge management processes which are not designed for informal institutions, for example informal forums, groups and teams of researchers and scientists) remains a challenge (Husted, Michailova, Minbaeva & Pedersen, 2012). So the main question, which has been widely asked in Social Media/Networking literature is: *“How can a governor act if he/she wants to manage the key knowledge players in the society to create and maintain desired knowledge for the governance?”* (Peselma et. al., 2015).

The above question is on how knowledge groups and clusters are to be governed. In other words, if the concept of governance can be considered as managing the managers or managing the managements, by adding social networks as a virtualized and informal social environment (Ardichvili, Page, Wentling, 2003), the question can be rewritten as follows: *“How can the governor use knowledge governance in informal social networks?”*

When a governor tries to govern knowledge, he needs to know about

1. Inner nature,
2. Achievable objectives and
3. Implementation mechanisms of required processes for desirable governance.

When governors use different and traditional methods such as organizing scientific conferences, meetings and seminars or use trial and error experiences to govern the social knowledge, the essential need to present a transparent and systematic knowledge governance framework is sensed.

The problem is a non-existent framework to show the possible differences and similarities between:

1. Knowledge governance in social networks and
2. Knowledge governance inside the organizations.

BACKGROUND

The origin of knowledge management is in organizations, where the organizations are bound to use knowledge as a means to pass their daily tasks and develop them. Knowledge management in project-based organizations has inherited project characteristics such as temporariness and uniqueness to show its flexibility (Peltokorpi & Tsuyuki, 2006). In such situations, many researchers believe in the need for knowledge management in independent projects (Hong, Kim, Kim & Leem, 2008; Pemsel, Wiewiora, Müller, Aubry, & Brown, 2014). This paradigm is prevalent in project management standards such as

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