ABSTRACT

Role of Cultural Attributes in Knowledge Sharing: An Empirical Study in Oil and Gas Sector

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Organizations are epistemic communities (Hakanson, L. 2010), primarily engaged in economic activities embedded in the existing knowledge base of an organization. Knowledge processes in the organization are intricately tied to the culture of an organization which serves a dual purpose of sociability and solidarity by integrating people in the organization and catering to the business needs. The overarching research question “Which attributes of organizational culture facilitate knowledge sharing in the organization?” is examined by focusing on two lines of inquiry, the first line of inquiry attempted to understand knowledge sharing in the organization and its goals and modes. The second line of inquiry attempted to investigate critical organizational attributes facilitating knowledge sharing in the organization.

The phenomenon under investigation is knowledge sharing, a culturally determined process in the organization intended to leverage internal and external knowledge, assumes ease to reinforce knowledge sharing behaviour of people through cultural competence. The technology used in knowledge sharing can inform human judgment, reduce transactional and interaction cost but it cannot replace human judgment. The study considers a complementary pluralistic view of knowledge as more processual and dynamic (Tsoukas, H.2010) and a synchronic view of culture as a unified orientation that shapes interaction and behaviour of people in the organization.

The study is primarily an explanatory research with a sample survey approach situated in the oil and gas sector in India. The sampling of organizations is based on convenience sampling, and respondents (unit of analysis) are chosen using random sampling method after applying inclusion criterion. For the investigation, primary data from 305 participants using a structured questionnaire was collected. Hypotheses are tested using statistical analysis for answering the overarching and other sub-questions. Statistical analysis included reliability analysis, univariate analysis, bivariate analysis, logistic regression modeling to assess the research models and various attributes investigated in the study.
The study identifies strategic coupling of different modes and goals of knowledge sharing which guides knowledge sharing initiative in the organization. The Research concludes that trust, openness, flexibility and rewards are the critical organizational attributes affecting knowledge sharing process in the organization. While all the significant attributes show a positive relationship, rewards in the organization negatively impacts knowledge sharing process. The in-depth analysis of Flexibility and trust confirms an effect of personal flexibility and interpersonal trust to make organizational system edifying.

The study refrains from giving a normative prescription by juxtaposing the findings with the best practices and focuses on the various ways to increase the visible connections between competence at an individual and organizational level. The practical value of research is due to the flexibility it gives to the organizations rather than going for a straight jacketed implementation of so-called knowledge sharing culture as suggested by the previous studies in the same domain.