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Original Article

Investigating the effect of knowledge self-efficacy, benefit from help, interaction norm, and social interactive groups on knowledge sharing

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ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to investigate the effect of knowledge self-efficacy, benefit from help, interaction norm, and social interactive groups on knowledge sharing of employees (Case study: Tejarat Bank employees in Shiraz). This study is descriptive in terms of nature, applied-developmental in terms of objective, and survey in terms of its conditions. The statistical population of the study included all employees of Tejarat Bank in Shiraz that 384 of them were selected as a sample of the study using a convenience random sampling method and Morgan table. To analyze the data, at the level of descriptive statistics methods, mean and standard deviation were used, and at the level of inferential statistics, a correlation coefficient test was used. The results indicated that knowledge self-efficacy, benefit from help, social interactive groups, and interaction norm affect knowledge sharing.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, Interaction norm, Benefit from help, Knowledge sharing, Social interactive groups.

Introduction

Nowadays, knowledge is recognized as a key and valuable asset, which is the basis of sustainable growth and the key to maintaining a sustainable competitive advantage of an organization. In the current climate of increasing global competition, there is no doubt about the role of knowledge and learning in improving organizational competence. The most vital issue in any organization is its employees and organizations as social institutions are composed of individuals and the main role of human beings is to manage these institutions. In other words, the organization minus human beings will not be able to overcome problems to achieve their goals. People working in the organization are the most important asset of organizations and the agent of achieving the goals and programs of any organization. One of the most important tools to achieve progress and development is the activity of organizations through which they can perform their duties efficiently and effectively. The development of any organization to large extent depends on the proper use of human resources. Thus, one of the issues in the management of human resources in the organization is to provide manpower and motivate them to improve the quality of their work. For people to be successful in their jobs, they must have the skills needed for their profession. As with other activities, individuals need relevant competencies to share successful and effective knowledge. These competencies can affect a person's performance and promotion. Knowledge sharing is interpreted as a process of identifying, distributing, and exploiting existing knowledge to solve problems more favorably compared to the past. The goal of knowledge sharing is to create new knowledge through different combinations of existing knowledge or to make better use of it. To create an effective knowledge sharing process, individuals should have a high level of willingness and ability. Studies indicate that the presence of employees who are willing to share knowledge and experience causes this process to begin and expand automatically [1]. The sharing of knowledge and experience is influenced by

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factors such as culture, incentives, media, contexts, and so on. In other words, culture is one of the basic components of knowledge management through which managers expect to increase productivity and create a sustainable competitive advantage in the organization. Cultural development that encourages the "sharing" of knowledge rather than the "hoarding" of knowledge requires the acceptance of members and the support of senior managers [2]. On the other hand, knowledge sharing can be defined as a systematic activity to transfer and exchange knowledge and experience between members of a group or organization with a common goal. In other words, knowledge sharing is interpreted as a process of identifying, distributing, and exploiting existing knowledge to solve problems better compared to the past [3]. Thus, given what was stated above, the present study aims at answering this question: what is the effect of self-efficacy, benefit from help, social interactive groups, and interaction norm on knowledge sharing?

Theoretical Principles of Study

Sharing Knowledge

Knowledge sharing is a culture of social interactions that include the exchange of tacit and explicit knowledge, experiences, and skills of employees between the organizational units or in the organization as a whole. To be more effective, organizational knowledge must be shared. The transfer involves the centralized and purposeful exchange of information from one sender to one recipient. This process facilitates innovation, group training, and solving problems through collaboration [4]. Knowledge sharing can be defined as a systematic activity to transfer and exchange knowledge and experience among members of a group or organization with a common goal. In other words, knowledge sharing is a process of identifying, distributing, and exploiting existing knowledge in order to better solve the problems compared to the past [3]. Nowadays, the quality and speed of coordination with changes in the surrounding environment determine the success of universities, and sharing of knowledge and experience helps them to identify changes through continuous learning and reproduction of knowledge and respond appropriately and timely. Emphasis on creating and recognizing tacit knowledge and sharing explicit knowledge through re-engineering the culture within the organization and using advanced technologies and the need to pay attention to creative and efficient leadership are keys for the success of universities in today's competitive markets. The scientific interaction resulting from acceptance of the culture of sharing knowledge and experience by faculty members and students provides the possibility of creating efficient training and effective learning in university and allows students to hypothesize, conceptualize, better recognize their specialty, and acquire required skills. By learning a set of skills, they can identify their strengths and weaknesses and prepare themselves better for society and the work environment [5]. Researchers have realized that knowledge sharing is positively associated with knowledge management. Informal knowledge sharing in organizations can be very effective. For example, the employees of 3M Company share knowledge by telling stories. British Petroleum Company employees also share knowledge face-to-face with people of other plants of this company [6].

Basic Components of Knowledge Sharing

Change of Culture

Change of culture is not easy and takes a long time, but cultures can change. Culture is defined in different ways. For example, it has been defined as "common beliefs, values, and attitudes" or "common and collective theories and programs that distinguish one group from another" and many other articles have defined it as rituals, customs, artifacts, and other work environment items. There are examples of the best cultures of knowledge sharing in places where everyone (even novices) believes that their knowledge is respected and valued and will be used in decision-making and informing [7].

Different Perspectives on Different Types of Knowledge Sharing Activities

Management authors and scholars argue that knowledge sharing is related more to individuals and their adaptation to social dynamics in the workplace rather than technology. These individuals emphasize more on creating a culture of knowledge sharing in the organization. However, information systems and information technology play a major role in supporting knowledge sharing, and without them, knowledge sharing activities will be less effective. The consensus on knowledge sharing suggests that the main challenge of organizations' knowledge sharing activities is to protect and maximize the value of tacit knowledge that is available to employees, customers, and stakeholders outside the organization. Many authors agree that individual knowledge is effective in the development of general knowledge of the organization and the effectiveness of knowledge-based works directly depends on the generation of new knowledge and sharing of existing useful knowledge through interaction between tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge. Organizational knowledge is knowledge shared by individuals and the process of its transformation in the organization has been well described by Nonaka and Takiochi in the theory of organizational knowledge creation. This theory describes four ways of transforming organizational knowledge. The first is socialization, in which skills and experiences are shared through observation and imitation, and tacit knowledge is generated from tacit knowledge. The second method is externalization, in which tacit knowledge is transformed into explicit knowledge through metaphors, analogies, models, and concepts, and books. In the third method, explicit knowledge and information within the organization are transferred from

one area to another area by analysis and reorganization, using computer networks and databases. In the fourth method (internalization), explicit knowledge is transformed into tacit knowledge using experience and simulation models. This process leads to the generation of four types of organizational knowledge, which include intangible assets and skills. The first type is explicit individual knowledge, also known as conscious knowledge, which can be stored and retrieved from records and individual memory. The second type is the hidden individual knowledge, which is also called automatic knowledge and is based on the theoretical, practical, and learning experiences of individuals. The third type is the explicit social knowledge of the organization, which is also known as the expressed knowledge and is reflected in designs or information stored in the organization's databases. The fourth type is the hidden social knowledge of the organization, which is also known as the collective knowledge and it is reflected in social and organizational affairs, systems, workflow, and organizational culture. [8]

Review of Literature

In a study entitled "The effect of knowledge sharing intention and competencies on job performance of managers of project-based organizations (Case Study: Petrochemical Industry Development Management Company), Ghelichi (2015) showed that there is an indirect and positive relationship between knowledge sharing intention and competencies and individual performance of managers [9]. It indicated that improving the analytical competencies of managers with knowledge sharing intention can have a significant impact on their performance. In a study conducted by Hosseinpour (2015) under the title of "Investigating the relationship between knowledge sharing and job performance of employees of the Education Department of Koohdasht city", results showed a positive and significant relationship between the whole scale of knowledge sharing, and the components of sequential knowledge sharing, explicit knowledge sharing, strategic knowledge sharing, and expert knowledge sharing and job performance [10]. In a study entitled "The relationship between management of knowledge sharing and management of access to legal knowledge acquisition and performance of NAJA staffs, Rezaei (2014) showed a positive and significant relationship between management of legal knowledge sharing and management of legal knowledge acquisition and performance of NAJA staff [11]. Besides, after regression analysis, based on the obtained results, a hypothetical model was drawn in LISREL and its fit was measured. In a study conducted by Rajaei Azarkhavani et al. (2014) under the title of "The relationship between knowledge sharing and improving scientific quality from the perspective of faculty members in selected universities of Isfahan" to assess the relationship between knowledge sharing and improving academic quality from the perspective of faculty members in selected universities of Isfahan, Pearson correlation coefficient showed a positive and significant relationship between knowledge sharing and improving scientific quality [12]. Moreover, a positive and significant relationship was found between knowledge sharing components and all components of scientific quality improvement. The results of the structural equation model showed that knowledge sharing has a positive and significant effect on improving scientific quality and the effect of knowledge sharing on improving scientific quality was calculated at 0.60. In other words, knowledge sharing predicts and explains 35% of the variance in improving scientific quality. In their research, Chen and Huang (2010) showed that self-efficacy can be interpreted as confidence in creating successful results in a given environment. For this reason, people with high levels of self-efficacy have the necessary skills, resources, and motivation to perform the given tasks or solve problems. As far as knowledge sharing activities are concerned, people who believe they have valuable knowledge or who have a high level of self-efficacy about knowledge sharing are more likely to provide and share knowledge with others. Previous studies have shown that the share of self-efficacy knowledge related to knowledge sharing activities in self-efficacy has a positive effect on effective knowledge and knowledge acquisition behavior. Lin Wuhang (2010) showed that people with a lower tendency to provide knowledge have higher levels of self-efficacy related to that knowledge [13]. In their research entitled "Effects of network sharing on knowledge sharing activities and job performance in organizations' social media environments", Kwahk et al. (2016) showed the effect of network sharing on knowledge sharing activities and job performance in social media organizations [14]. The experimental analysis showed that knowledge self-efficacy, social interactions, and interaction norm have a positive effect on knowledge sharing activities. The impact of network sharing leads to strengthened knowledge sharing and finally enhanced job performance of employees of the organization.

Methods

The present study was an applied-survey study. The statistical population of this study included all the employees of Tejarat Bank in Shiraz that 384 of them were selected as a sample of the study using a convenience random sampling and Morgan table.

Data Collection Method

In the present study, a mixed-method (library and field) was used in this study to collect the data. The used tools were a questionnaire and documents. The questionnaires were scored on the Likert scale.

Data Collection Tools

questionnaire has 36 questions and its dimensions and related questions are shown in the table below.

Validity and reliability of the tool: In the present study, content validity was used to examine the validity. Cronbach's alpha

coefficient, composite reliability, and an average of variance extracted were used to evaluate the reliability. In this study, to check the content validity, the questionnaire was presented to several professors to review the questionnaire in terms of content validity. Finally, a composite reliability index was used to evaluate reliability. The tool reliability for the subscales self-efficacy, benefit from help, social interaction, interaction norm, and knowledge was obtained at 0.89, 0.82, 0.87, 0.86, and 0.86.

Procedure

To carry out the research, 384 questionnaires were prepared and designed. The questionnaires were randomly provided to employees to complete them. Also, employees were ensured of the necessity of research and confidentiality of the information. After completing the questionnaires by employees, they were collected and analyzed.

Data Analysis Method

To analyze the data, first, the information was transferred to the computer using SPSS software. Data analysis was performed in two sections of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. In the descriptive statistics section, using the Table of frequency and mean and standard deviation, the data were described and in the second section, the research hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient.

Results

Descriptive results of research variable

Table 1: Examining the Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation of Knowledge Sharing

Variable	mean	SD
Knowledge Sharing	2.99	0.4

Based on Table 1, the Mean of Knowledge Sharing Scores Is 2.99.

Testing the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Knowledge Self-efficacy Affects Knowledge Sharing.

To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation coefficient was used.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficient between Knowledge Self-efficacy and Knowledge Sharing

	Correlation Coefficient	‹ P
Knowledge Self-efficacy Knowledge Sharing	0.607	0.000

Based on Table 2, the correlation coefficient was obtained at 0.607 at the level of 0.000 and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, this coefficient is significant (P <0.01). Hence, knowledge self-efficacy has a direct and significant effect on knowledge sharing.

Hypothesis 2: Benefit from help affects knowledge sharing.

To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation coefficient was used.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient between the Benefit from Help and Knowledge Sharing

	Correlation Coefficient	‹ P
Benefit from Help Knowledge Sharing	0.612	0.000

Based on Table 3, the correlation coefficient was obtained at 0.612 at the level of 0.000 and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, this coefficient is significant (P <0.01). Hence, the benefit of help has a direct and significant effect on knowledge sharing.

Hypothesis 3: Social Interactive Groups Affect Knowledge Sharing.

To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation coefficient was used.

Table 4 - Correlation Coefficient between Social Interaction Nodes and Knowledge Sharing

	Correlation Coefficient	‹ P
Social Interaction Nodes Knowledge Sharing	0.609	0.000

Based on Table 4, the correlation coefficient was obtained at 0.609 at the level of 0.000 and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, this coefficient is significant (P <0.01). Hence, social interaction nodes have a direct and significant effect on knowledge sharing.

Hypothesis 4: Interaction Norm Affects Knowledge Sharing.

To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation was used.

Table 5: Correlation Coefficient between Interaction Norm and Knowledge Sharing

	Correlation Coefficient	‹ P
Interaction Norm Knowledge Sharing	0.640	0.000

Based on Table 5, the correlation coefficient was obtained at 0.640 at the level of 0.000 and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, this coefficient is significant (P <0.01). Hence, interaction norm has a direct and significant effect on knowledge sharing.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the effect of network sharing on knowledge sharing and job performance of employees (Case

study: Tejarat Bank employees in Shiraz). The following results were obtained:

1. Knowledge self-efficacy affects knowledge sharing. To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation coefficient was used. Based on the obtained results, the correlation coefficient is equal to 0.607 at the level of 0.000 and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, the coefficient is significant ($P < 0.01$) so the knowledge self-efficacy has a direct and significant effect on knowledge sharing. If we consider knowledge in people's minds as gold in a box, its value is revealed when it is shared, like when the gold holder opens the box and reveals its value by showing the gold inside the box. The role of knowledge sharing in knowledge management is so important that some authors argue that knowledge management supports knowledge sharing. One of the reasons for the importance of knowledge sharing is that it reduces the costs, improves performance, improves customer service, reduces time to develop new products, reduces delays in delivering goods to customers, and finally reduce the cost of finding and accessing valuable types of knowledge within the organization. The ultimate goal of employee knowledge sharing is to transfer and transform the experience and knowledge of all individuals into organizational assets and resources to increase and promote organizational effectiveness.
2. Benefit from help affects knowledge sharing. To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation coefficient was used. Based on the results, the correlation coefficient is equal to 0.612 at the level of 0.000 and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, this coefficient is significant ($P < 0.01$). Thus, the benefit of help has a direct and significant effect on knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing activities are not something that can be supervised or forced to do. However, support between an organization and its subunits, and members of the organization has a direct effect on the flow of communication in the organization and thus affects the amount of knowledge shared within the units of the organization and between units and branches of the organization. Many employees do not share knowledge for fear of losing their job security. One of the reasons for this problem is that they do not have the necessary confidence in the goals and intentions of their superiors in terms of knowledge sharing. Some low-level and middle-level employees also deliberately do not share knowledge because they are more likely to refuse to upgrade if their supervisors feel that their subordinates have a higher level of knowledge. Thus, emphasizing the expectations of management and its long-term support for knowledge sharing activities and playing a supportive role in this regard is crucial and fundamental to create a culture of knowledge sharing. In order for individuals' activities to create a culture in the organization that promotes knowledge sharing, the organization should provide appropriate tools for data sharing for these individuals. By listening to the demands of employees, managers must be able to make an accurate assessment of what is needed so that they can turn their unit into an efficient and effective unit that transmits information with just a few simple clicks on a mouse.
3. Social interactive groups affect knowledge sharing. To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation coefficient was used. Based on the results, the correlation coefficient is equal to 0.609 at the level of 0.000 and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, this coefficient is significant ($P < 0.01$). Thus, social interactive groups have a direct and significant impact on knowledge sharing. Employee support involves transferring of experiences, motivating, problem-solving, and collaboration to solve problems by coworkers within the organization. In the process of knowledge sharing, coworkers must be approved so that they show more interest in knowledge sharing. Coworkers can influence employees' feelings about knowledge sharing. However, in today's complex world, employees need the help of coworkers to achieve their goals. Over-formalization of the organization's environment results in reduced intimacy and increased mistrust between employees, especially between subordinates and superiors. One of the consequences of this lack of trust is a reduction in knowledge sharing. The existence of informal networks helps employees to trust each other and voluntarily share their knowledge and insights and actively and voluntarily collaborate. An open and flexible organizational structure is the best structure for knowledge sharing. In a highly-structured, hierarchical, and multi-layered organization, where the flow of communication is from top to down, the likelihood of effective knowledge sharing is greatly lower than that of an open and flexible organization. An effective knowledge sharing is more likely to occur in an organization with a flat organizational chart where the flow of communication is not limited to one particular direction, and usually has small organizational units and areas of operation or has project teams.
4. The interaction norms affect knowledge sharing. To examine the results of this hypothesis, the statistical method of correlation coefficient was used. Based on the research results, the correlation coefficient is equal to 0.640 at the level of 0.000, and since this level is less than the acceptable value of 0.05, this coefficient is significant ($P < 0.01$). Thus, interaction norm has a direct and significant effect on knowledge sharing. Public interaction norms and civic engagement networks increase trust and social cooperation because they reduce the incentives to break covenants, ambiguities, and unclear atmosphere, and provide models for future trust and cooperation.

"Trust", in addition to personal attitude, is an essential asset of the social system. Thus, with increasing the level of trust in a community, the cooperation will be higher. Accordingly, when more "social capital" is used, it will increase, unlike physical capital, which is depreciated and reduced. According to Putnam, people with higher interaction will get more information about each other and more motivated to trust each other.

Research Limitations

People may not have enough self-esteem and may not answer responsibly and honestly to items

Research Recommendations

Given the importance of knowledge sharing and its undeniable role in the development of individual, social, organizational, and management capabilities, managers are recommended to provide conditions for people to easily share their knowledge. Finally, it is recommended that this research is conducted in a larger population and a larger sample size.

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