

The Impacts of Knowledge Sharing Across Organizational Levels in Mexico

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Abstract

Today's economy prioritizes knowledge, prompting organizations to craft robust Knowledge Management (KM) strategies, which involve identifying and leveraging intangible assets and fostering knowledge sharing. Key processes like modelling and evaluation establish a sustainable KM framework. This study explores factors facilitating knowledge exchange across management levels in Mexican organizations. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and PLS models were utilized for preliminary analysis, revealing that KM strategies indirectly impact knowledge sharing, aligning with management roles and emphasizing the framework's importance in disseminating knowledge. Implications of this study are discussed.

Keywords: knowledge management, knowledge management strategy, strategy planning, tacit knowledge, knowledge management modelling

1. Introduction

Knowledge sharing is pivotal for organizational innovation and performance. In today's competitive business environment, it's essential to maintain a sustainable advantage. Understanding its dynamics is crucial for researchers and practitioners. Numerous authors emphasize the importance of knowledge sharing for SMEs' innovation. This research aims to identify critical knowledge across management levels, considering organizational culture. Through a synthesis of academic literature, empirical studies, and practical examples, this study contributes to the understanding of knowledge sharing's implications for the success of firms.

Although there are quite a lot of studies on the diverging perspectives among academics, professionals, and individual stakeholders in the specific domain, it appears that there is still a gap concerning the detection and identification of knowledge loss across different management tiers levels in firms. Therefore, the following research question is raised:

- How can we detect and reduce potential knowledge loss across organizational management tiers (operational, tactical, and strategic)?

The paper is organized into several chapters. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature, Chapter 3 outlines the research methods employed. In Chapter 4, we discuss the preliminary findings of the study and their implications. Chapter 5 delves into the discussion and conclusions drawn from the current research. Lastly, Chapter 6 addresses the limitations encountered and suggests future directions for this study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge sharing is vital for organizational effectiveness, innovation, and competitive advantage, involving voluntary exchange within organizations (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) highlight its role in converting tacit to explicit knowledge, crucial for organizational knowledge creation. Trust, reciprocity, social networks, and individual traits like motivation and self-efficacy facilitate knowledge sharing (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Bock et al., 2005; Cabrera & Cabrera, 2002; Connelly et al. 2019 and H. Lin., 2007) underscore individual traits' impact on knowledge sharing. Various methods, from traditional communities of practice to digital platforms, facilitate knowledge sharing (Wenger et al., 2002; M.-H. Lin et al., 2017; Wasko & Faraj, 2005), leading to enhanced problem-solving, innovation, and decision-making (Cummings & Teng, 2003; Szulanski, 1996), thereby improving organizational learning and agility (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Van Den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). Understanding the mechanisms, factors, and outcomes of

knowledge-sharing aids in creating collaborative learning environments and fostering innovation. Yet, addressing challenges like knowledge hoarding and technological barriers necessitates strategic interventions to optimize knowledge-sharing initiatives for organizational success.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 The research model

The research model comprises five variables: 4 Independent ones (KM Strategy planning, KM Strategy evaluation, Strategy improvement, and modelling KM Strategy) and 1 Dependent variable: Enabling knowledge sharing. Each dimension was gauged using multi-item scales developed by the authors, which were in line with established theoretical frameworks (Figure 1). These variables are defined and supported by existing literature and were validated through the usage of Cronbach's alpha value, which is used to indicate whether subjects are consistent with their answers as provided to them through various items (reliability).

3.1 KM strategy planning

The importance of learning in strategizing and its role in strategic planning necessitate reevaluation. Strategic planning capability enables organizations to adapt to market changes, facilitated by knowledge management activities. KM strategy encompasses creating outlooks, designing architecture, and organizing implementation activities. Understanding and measuring knowledge are critical challenges that are vital for value creation. Managers play a crucial role in fostering knowledge sharing and innovation. KM strategic planning is essential for aligning initiatives with organizational goals. Effective knowledge sharing enhances innovation and competitive advantage, requiring a robust understanding of knowledge dynamics. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) managers are pivotal in ensuring effective knowledge distribution and exchange within strategic networks. Understanding knowledge fields and sharing structures is vital to prevent knowledge loss and maintain competitiveness.

3.2 Hypotheses:

The research model provides several Hypotheses 4, which will be presented here:

H1: KM Strategy planning is positively associated with Modeling KM Strategy.

H2: Modeling KM Strategy is positively associated with Modeling KM Strategy.

H2a. Modeling KM Strategy serves as a mediator between KM Strategy planning and Enabling Knowledge sharing.

H3. KM Strategy planning is positively associated with Enabling knowledge sharing.

3.3 Data Sources and Analysis

The study proposes a consolidated model for organizations to identify and mitigate critical knowledge loss and SMARTVision knowledge management. Following a deductive approach, the hypotheses are developed based on existing theory, aiming to test variable relationships as mediators. A questionnaire-based survey was submitted to over 200 respondents across various organizational levels and expertise in Mexico, and the data was saved in Excel sheets. SPSS and Hayes' models were utilized to analyze variables and test indirect effects. Partial Least Squares (PLS) - Structural Equation Modeling, along with SPSS v.29 and PROCESS v.4.2, validated and assessed the dataset. The internal consistency of the dataset exceeds 0.7, which is a common and acceptable measure based on Cronbach's alpha results (Table 2).

4. Findings

This study's results as provided in Figure 1 & Table 1. Results show that Knowledge Management Strategy planning (KMSP), Modeling Knowledge Management Strategy (MKMS) and Evaluate Knowledge Management Strategy (EKMS) have a direct and indirect effect in Enabling Knowledge Sharing (EKS).

As EKMS has a positive effect on Strategy Improvement (SI), KMSP have a negative direct effect (-0.0001) on EKS and a positive indirect effect (0.2334) resulting in a total effect of 0.2333 on EKS. In concordance H3 has a p value of 0.172 therefore we reject the hypothesis that Knowledge Management Strategy Planning is positive associated with Enabling Knowledge Sharing.

It was also found that MKMS acts as a mediator between KMSP and EKS having a total effect of .9815 showing the importance of MKMS in the process of Enabling Knowledge Sharing (EKS). Moreover, EKMS was also found to be a mediator between KMSP and EKS with a total effect of 0.0078.

5. Discussion

The study indicates that KMSP, MKMS, EKMS, and SI significantly impact knowledge sharing facilitation, aligning with Vafaei-Zadeh et al. (2019) emphasizing the importance of robust knowledge management strategies to mitigate intentional knowledge leaks. Recognizing knowledge sharing as collaborative knowledge exchange, this research also underscores the pivotal roles of Modeling Knowledge Management and Evaluating Knowledge Management strategies in enabling knowledge sharing. Thus, formulating and executing a comprehensive

Knowledge Management Strategy, incorporating modeling, evaluation, and enhancement, becomes integral to organizational operations, facilitating knowledge transfer and comprehension. Moreover, fostering knowledge sharing fosters innovation and business growth, necessitating strategic planning and evaluation to sustain this process.

Establishing a standardized process for knowledge sharing can confer a sustainable competitive advantage by safeguarding critical knowledge and deterring intentional leaks, supporting organizational resilience and success.

7. Future Research and Limitations

The study establishes a unified framework to facilitate knowledge sharing within companies by pinpointing critical knowledge areas through SME input, mitigating knowledge loss risks. The suggested model framework underscores the necessity of strategic KM planning to Model KM, Evaluate KM, and Enable Knowledge Sharing, demonstrating their interconnectedness and positive impact on knowledge-sharing facilitation. The limitations of this study include the study's focus on respondents solely from Mexico across various sectors and organization sizes, suggesting that future research should apply the questionnaire globally. Additionally, considering employee motivations for knowledge sharing could enrich the framework's comprehensiveness.

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APPENDIX: FIGURES & TABLES

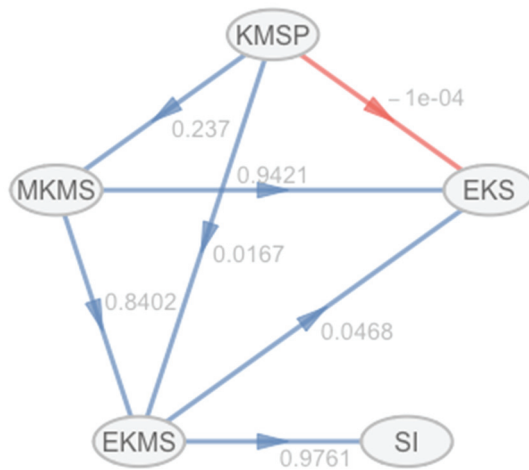


Figure 1 – The study model with the direct effect values.

Hypothesis	Variable/effect	PLS - SEM			Results
		Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect	
H1	KMSp -> MKMS	0.2370	0.0000	0.2370	Supported
H2	MKMS -> EKS	0.9421	0.0394	0.9815	Supported
H2a	KMSp -> MKMS -> EKS	0.0000	0.2232	0.9815	Supported
H3	KMSp -> EKS	-0.0001	0.2334	0.2333	Supported

Table 1 – PLS (received through the SEM analysis)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. items
KMSp	0.889	5
MKMS	0.981	7
EKMS	0.970	5
SI	0.979	5
EKS	0.976	7

Table 2– Cronbach's alpha values of Items.