

Knowledge Sharing Behaviour in Malaysia Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract. Despite efforts by Malaysian higher education institutions to promote knowledge sharing, only a small number of HEI have been involved in these efforts. Academics will be more effective at their work and more productive if they share their knowledge. Knowledge is important for a university to strengthen its research and teaching activities. Knowledge sharing is vital for any tertiary education institution to strengthen research and teaching activities, however, not all academicians are keen or willing to share their tacit knowledge and experiences. Therefore, the valuable knowledge was not well disseminated and under-utilized as available resources. People believe their expertise is valuable and useful and are reluctant to share it without incentives. Hence, this study is aimed at determining the barrier to knowledge sharing among academicians.

Keywords: Knowledge sharing barriers, academician, Malaysia higher education, information management.

1 Introduction

Knowledge management (KM) is the process of the store organizing, using, and sharing information in an organization in which the employees must communicate with each other from different departments and have a sharing session to achieve the organization's goal (Jusoh & Alfawareh, 2019). The concept of KM has received a lot of attention in the business world since it was first introduced. Now, it has become regarded as critical to the operation of the modern organization (Daud et al., 2015). The demand for a knowledge management become prominent as the organizations could gain benefit from knowledge management system (KMS). Similarly, efficiencies in the utilization knowledge resources will allow organizations to achieve a competitive edge. In the perspective of an organization, the performance could be im-

proved by providing employees with useful and relevant knowledge, at the same time could help the organization's long-term viability and success.

Knowledge would be a competitive advantage to ensure that the organization achieve their objectives. To achieve this, the knowledge needs to be well-organized to ensure a common or shared vision that can be achieved. Hence, knowledge sharing (KS) is an important tool in the KM. As such KS is the main enabler of KM. There are two ways to retain knowledge: (i) internally or in a document such as a policy paper or conceptual paper, and (ii) it can be used in electronic books, databases, and information systems (Saleh & Samsudin, 2021). The knowledge that an organization has includes the idea, knowledge, and experience of its employees. Thus, sharing their knowledge can help to achieve organizational goals.

Despite efforts by the higher education institutions (HEI) to promote the idea of KM implementation in Malaysian institutions of higher learning, Sharimllah Devi et al. (2007, 2008, 2009) found that these efforts were ineffective because only a small number of HEI have been involved in these efforts. They also mentioned that most knowledge management studies listed are conducted in the private sector, and that little research has been conducted on cultural factors that support KM implementation, particularly among the HEI (Nassuora & Hasan, 2010). Higher education institutions are places where people seek and learn new information and create, manage, and disseminate knowledge across society (Saleh & Samsudin, 2021). Additionally, HEI also functions as a knowledge repository and is no longer solely responsible for imparting knowledge to students. In the academic context, KM is a relatively recent field where KM will be an important topic, especially in national and international conferences and seminars. Many universities worldwide will be actively involved in knowledge management operations and research. It is currently gaining popularity, especially in education, because of the necessity to reveal the intellectual potential accessible in the institution to share experiences (Dhamdhare, 2015). These institutions manage, combine, and share knowledge with their professors and staff. Thus, knowledge sharing is inherently difficult yet a critical idea in institutions of higher learning

Previous research stated that KM barriers are elements that have a negative impact on KM implementation and have a low likelihood of being beneficial (Faradillah et al., 2020). In addition, knowledge is important for a university to strengthen its research and teaching activities. Academics can access the university's intellectual capital through knowledge sharing, thereby making the institution more innovative and competitive (Jusoh & Alfawareh, 2019). Based on the statement, this study is aimed at determining the barrier to knowledge sharing among academicians.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Knowledge Sharing

In any organization, knowledge is the most valuable resource. It refers to individual understanding based on experience as general knowledge, and it should be shared

for various reasons. Prior literatures defined knowledge in a variety of ways. One of them has defined knowledge as "a fluid combination of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and assimilating new experiences and information" (Saleh & Samsudin, 2021). Knowledge management (KM) has been an area for wide debate and research among academics and practitioners (Sohail & Daud, 2009) because the important part of the KM process is the flow of information between employees of the organization.

Knowledge sharing (KS) is a part of the KM process, and it can be defined as "the process of transferring knowledge from one person to another in an organization. It is a process to accumulate shared knowledge among members" (Rusuli & Tasmin, 2010). Knowledge sharing is the most important aspect (Nassuora & Hasan, 2010). Additionally, knowledge sharing is described as the exchange of experiences, events, thoughts, or understanding about anything (in general) to gain additional insights and understanding about something for momentary curiosity (Sohail & Daud, 2009). Knowledge sharing can be viewed as the exchange of all sorts of knowledge, including explicit knowledge information, "know-how," and "know-who." (Sohail & Daud, 2009).

According to Kalu (2019), knowledge or ability that is difficult to formalize or identify involves intellectual themes such as beliefs, reasoning, and opinions but is difficult to transmit to others and is referred to as tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is different from explicit, which can be passed on to intangible things; it is easier to record and share (Kalu, 2019). However, even though explicit information is simpler to impart, there are still barriers. The problem is that, even when explicit knowledge is given, the person using the material has to make up their mind about what it means (Rusuli & Tasmin, 2010). Both tacit and explicit knowledge should be expressed in mutually beneficial entities because the information is neither entirely tacit nor entirely explicit (Saleh & Samsudin, 2021).

2.2 Barrier to Knowledge Sharing

Individual, organisational, and technological restrictions on knowledge sharing were emphasised by Riege (2005). Riege identified the following specific obstacles: lack of time, fear, a low level of awareness, variations in experience level, and poor communication. Differences in communication skills, interpersonal incompetence, education, age, and gender. Regarding organisational impediments, the researcher lists a few, such as lack of deficits in leadership, remuneration, corporate culture, infrastructure, and corporate culture. corporate communication and resources. In addition, there is a lack of technical assistance and resources. According to Daud et al. (2015), organisational barriers and issues with knowledge sharing are unavoidable. In theory, knowledge sharing is unnatural. People believe that their information is valuable and relevant, and they are reticent to share it absent suitable incentives. Individual, organisational, and technological obstacles impede the sharing of information. Individual limitations include a lack of communication skills and social networks, a different national culture, a different job title, and a deficiency of time and trust. Lack of infrastructure and resources, accessibility of formal and informal meeting venues, and

the physical environment are examples of organisational impediments. These are some of the factors that make it difficult for people to work together. Among other things, barriers at the technological level are created by a lack of motivation to utilise an application, excessive expectations of IS/IT systems, and challenges with establishing, integrating, and altering technology-based systems (Sohail & Daud, 2009).

3 Methodology

The research methodology section describes the process of collecting data from respondents. This section describes the study's processes, including sampling method, sample size, unit of analysis, measurement, data collection, and data analysis. The study used survey research methodology. The target population for the research comprised academicians at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) in Malaysia. The sample size for the study was 142. A questionnaire was used to collect responses from all participants in the study. The questionnaire inquired about the respondents' backgrounds, academics' knowledge sharing activities, and the perception of academicians towards the factors that influence knowledge sharing behaviour. However, this sample questionnaire will be reorganised to meet the requirements of this study. In addition, the researcher used a Likert scale and a multiple-choice questionnaire. The dissemination and collection of questionnaires lasted four weeks. An electronic survey using a Google Form questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire was sent out via email. The data that was collected was put together using descriptive statistics, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) made it easier to look at the data.

4 Findings

The study showed the result on the perception of academicians towards the factors that influence knowledge sharing behaviour.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on the socio-demographic characteristics

Measure	Classification	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	42	29.6
	Female	100	70.4
Age	22-25	1	.7
	26--30	5	3.5
	31-35	35	24.6
	36-40	46	32.4
	Above 40	55	38.7
Qualification	PhD	44	31.0
	Master	97	68.3

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	Other	1	.7
Position	Professor	1	.7
	Associate Professor	9	6.3
	Senior Lecturer	87	61.3
	Lecturer	45	31.7
Area of specialization	Business	5	3.5
	Islamic studies	3	2.1
	Language	16	11.3
	Health Science/ Healthcare	12	8.5
	Medicine	3	2.1
	Information Technology (IT)	2	1.4
	Art & Design	5	3.5
	Construction/Built	9	6.3
	Environment/Environment Management		
	Engineering	5	3.5
	Science/Biology/ Chemistry	7	4.9
	Information/ Library/ Knowledge Management / Information System	6	4.2
	Management	18	12.7
	Mathematics	4	2.8
	Architecture	5	3.5
	Administrative Science	4	2.8
	Computer Science	4	2.8
	Sport Science	2	1.4
	Mass Communication	2	1.4
	Urban Planning	1	.7
	Others	2	1.4
	HRM	2	1.4
	Marketing	4	2.8
	Entrepreneurship	1	.7
	Hospitality	1	.7
	Finance	3	2.1
Accounting	11	7.7	
Economics	5	3.5	
Working Experience	0-4 years	14	9.9
	5-9 years	27	19.0
	10-14 years	55	38.7
	15-19 years	24	16.9
	Above 20 years	22	15.5

Table 1 show the descriptive statistic on the socio-demographic characteristics. Among a total of 142 respondents, majority of participants came from female respondents with 100 (70.4 percent) compared to male respondents, who had only 42 (29.6 percent). According to age range, 55 (38.7 percent) of respondents are age above 40. With only 1 person, the age group between 22-25 had the lowest percentage which is 0.7 percent.

Most respondents (68.3 percent or 97 of them) are had Master Qualification, while 44 (31 percent) are had PhD qualification. In terms of respondents' position, 87 (61.3 percent) were senior lecturers, 45 (31.7percent) were lecturers, 9 (6.3 percent) were associate professors and only 1 (0.7 percent) were professor. Furthermore, 55 out of 142 respondents (38.7 percent) had worked between for 10-14 years, 27 (19.0 percent) had worked between 5-9 years, 24 (16.9 percent) had worked between 15-19 years, 22 (15.5 percent) had worked more than 20 years and 5 (3.5 percent) had worked between 0-4 years. This demonstrates that the majority of respondents had worked between for 10-14 years. Table I also includes information on area of specialisation

Statements	Mode
There is general lack of time to share knowledge.	4
Colleague does not share the knowledge because of poor verbal/written communication and interpersonal skills.	3
There is a general lack of trust among staff in my university/college.	2
Colleague in my university/college does not share knowledge because they think having knowledge portray them as powerful.	3
There is lack of formal and informal activities to cultivate knowledge sharing in my university/college.	4
It is difficult to convince colleagues on the value and the benefits of the knowledge that I may possess.	4
Academician is reluctant to seek knowledge from their seniors because of the status fear.	2
Physical work environment and layout of work areas restrict effective knowledge sharing in my workplace.	4
Existing university/college culture does not provide sufficient support for sharing knowledge	2
IT systems and processes are in place in my university/college to share knowledge.	4
Colleague in my university/college does not share knowledge because of the fear of it being misused by taking unjust credit for it.	2
Retention of highly skilled and experienced staff is not a high priority in my university /college.	2
There is lack of interaction between those who need knowledge and those who can provide knowledge.	4
There is lack of rewards and recognition systems that would motivate people to share their knowledge.	4

Table 2 shows the mean score is based on a five-five-point scale, on which 1 is for strongly disagreeing and 5 is for strongly agreeing. The academics' views on the barriers to the sharing of knowledge. We can see that there is a general lack of time to

share knowledge, a lack of formal and informal activities to cultivate knowledge sharing in my university/college, it is difficult to convince colleagues of the value and benefits of the knowledge that I may possess, the physical work environment and layout of work areas restrict effective knowledge sharing in my workplace, IT systems and processes are in place in my university/college to share knowledge, and also a lack of rewards and recognition systems that would motivate people to share their knowledge have been identified as the most frequent barriers to KS, which is agreed (4).

In addition to the result on the lack of trust among staff in my university/college, academicians are reluctant to seek knowledge from their seniors because of status fear, university/college culture does not provide sufficient support for sharing knowledge, colleagues in my university/college do not share knowledge because of the fear of it being misused by taking unjust credit for it, and retention of highly skilled and experienced staff is not a high priority in my university/college get most frequent answer of disagree (2) to the statement that shows barriers of knowledge sharing, IT systems and processes are in place in my university/college to share knowledge.

5 Discussions

This research examines the significance of barriers to knowledge sharing among academicians. There are a few results with a total mode score of 4 (agree) for barriers to knowledge sharing among academicians. The result is that there is a general lack of time to share knowledge; there is a lack of formal and informal activities to cultivate knowledge sharing in my university/college; it is difficult to convince colleagues of the value and benefits of the knowledge that I may possess; the physical work environment and layout of work areas restrict effective knowledge sharing in my workplace; there is a lack of interaction between those who need knowledge and those who can provide knowledge; and there is a lack of rewards and recognition systems that would motivate people to share their knowledge are significant barriers to knowledge sharing. Although this result is supported by theoretical arguments in literature (e.g. Riege, 2005; Daud et al., 2015), the results show our finding is different from Nasuora & Hasan (2010) where there is a lack of interaction between those who need knowledge and those who can provide knowledge; and there is a lack of rewards and recognition systems that would motivate people to share their knowledge were rated low in terms of barriers to knowledge sharing.

Nadason et al. (2017) suggests that in order for an organisation to be effective, it must pay attention to all four components (Individuals, Culture, Technology and Organizational). Developing its competitive advantages, however, will not provide much value on its own. The strategic management tool of the organisation is relevant knowledge that can be leveraged and managed. Therefore, it is crucial for enterprises' management to seek out the capitals necessary to acquire, maintain, and use knowledge in order to achieve greater levels of success. Evidence indicates that information sharing is crucial for firms (Jahani et al., 2010). Problems arise when

knowledge is not utilised effectively due to communication issues or "knowledge hoarding," or when it is buried in an organization's archives. So, it is clear that the knowledge is not being used to its fullest.

6 Conclusions

In sum, academics could benefit from knowledge sharing as a practise because it could have a significant impact on their work. In knowledge sharing, new knowledge is generated through the exchange of existing knowledge. This boosts the effectiveness of groups. Furthermore, individuals are more likely to share their information. It can enable team members or coworkers generate new ideas, share their experiences, and collaborate. In addition, academics should disseminate the information they have studied and debated by publishing articles or participating in other media. Academics must recognise the importance of knowledge sharing. The identification of these knowledge-sharing behaviours reveals the factors, actions, efficient platforms, and obstacles to knowledge sharing. To operate effectively, individuals must recognise the need of information sharing and help. In addition, scholars impart their knowledge to others. To guarantee that individuals recognise the advantages of knowledge sharing, additional effort and education are required. The academic community appears receptive and enthusiastic about the exchange of ideas and data. It is amazing that people do not view knowledge sharing as a burden or time-consuming activity because it is not their responsibility. As a result, both the work quality and the ability to make informed decisions will increase, which is beneficial for the university.

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