TRUST, KNOWLEDGE SELF-EFFICACY AND RECIPROCAL BENEFITS ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG MALAYSIAN ACADEMICIANS

Jamsari Alias
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
(Email: jamsari@ukm.edu.my)
Norazila Mat
Nazri Muslim

To cite this document: Jamsari, Norazila & Nazri (2019). Trust, knowledge self-efficacy and reciprocal benefits on knowledge sharing among Malaysian academicians. *International Journal of Supply Chain, Operation Management and Logistic,* x(xx), xx-xx.

Abstract: The development of universities in Malaysia offer an interesting landscape of knowledge sharing among academicians. Much have been mentioned on knowledge sharing, but less has been debated on knowledge sharing between university faculty academicians, especially within their work settings. Therefore, this study is aimed to idenify the impacts of individual factors; namely trust, self-efficacy and reciprocal benefits on knowledge sharing in university. This study is conducted through a set of survey instrument among academicians in a selected Malaysian public university. The findings of this study showed that all the individual factors on knowledge sharing are collectively agreed as vital. This findings could suggest us a conclusion that the practice of knowledge sharing among Malaysian academicians are in good condition without any major problems related to the individual factors of the academicians themselves.

Keyword: knowledge sharing, trust, knowledge self-efficacy, reciprocal benefit, individual factors.

Introduction

Knowledge, defined in this study as a mix of experience, values, contextual information and expert insight (Davenport and Prusak, 1998), has been highlighted by many academicians and practitioners as the most important and competitive resource for organizational success (eg: Quinn et al., 1996; Albert and Bradley, 1997). Organizations might not survive in Knowledge Era without proper strategy to managing and leveraging value of their intellectual assets (Abell and Oxbrow, 2001). As a result, more organizations, both large and small, turn to knowledge management strategies to manage and leverage their organizational knowledge in full (Davenport et al, 1998).

However, there are several challenges in knowledge management attempt like maintaining, locating and applying knowledge in organization. The major challenge in knowledge management is to enhance knowledge creation and sharing (Grant, 1996; Davenport, 1997; Wasako and Faraj, 2000) since the success or failure of knowledge management always depends on this. Many believe that one way to make knowledge become

more powerful for organizations is through knowledge sharing practices, so that individual knowledge can be transferred into organizational knowledge through the interaction and communication of individual co-workers, in project teams or between projects, and these knowledge sharing processes could assist in knowledge creation at higher levels (Nonaka, 1994). In other words, through knowledge sharing, an organization can transform the knowledge of individuals into organizational knowledge.

Previously, the study of knowledge sharing is dominated by business organizations where their ultimate goal for knowledge sharing is profit-motivated. However, the issue of knowledge sharing is equally important for a knowledge-based institution, such as a university, where knowledge production, distribution and application are the main activity in the institution (Petrides and Nodine, 2003). With the increased number of universities in Malaysia, there are a need for them to upgrade their institution knowlegde in order to differentiate among themselve to serve as a as reservoir of knowledge and are no longer just providing knowledge to students. However, comprehensive research in the area of knowledge sharing among academicians especially in their university setting has been rather limited.

Objective of Study:
This study is aimed:
1. To identify the impacts of Trust on knowledge sharing among Malaysian academicians.
2. To identify the impacts of Knowledge Self-Efficacy on knowledge sharing among Malaysian academicians.
3. To identify the impacts of Reciprocal Benefits on knowledge sharing among Malaysian academicians.

Literature Review
The recognition of knowledge as the key resource in organizations affirms the need for processes that facilitate the creation, sharing and leveraging of individual and collective knowledge (Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal, 2001). Currently, it is popular belief that one way to make knowledge become more powerful for organizations is through knowledge sharing practices (Quinn et al, 1996; Klein, 2005), so that individual knowledge can become organizational knowledge. Organizational knowledge is developed through the interaction and communication of individual co-workers, in project teams or between projects, and this knowledge sharing process could assist in knowledge creation at a higher level (Nonaka, 1994; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998).

For that reason, many turn to a knowledge management initiative to manage their knowledge. The effective management of knowledge in an organization depends on how well knowledge sharing occurs within the organization since knowledge sharing is a crucial activity for knowledge management success (Wah, 1999; Cabrera and Cabrera, 2002; McDermott and O'Dell, 2001). Therefore, knowledge sharing is considered a very challenging process requiring the organization to implement certain knowledge strategies effectively to manage the process (Cho et al, 2007).
Sabherwal and Sabherwal (2005) view knowledge sharing as involving the transfer or dissemination of knowledge among individuals or groups as a basis for knowledge utilization to create competitive advantage for the firm. Lee (2001:324) has defined knowledge sharing as "activities of transferring or disseminating knowledge from one person, group, or organization to another", and Van den Hooff and de Ridder (2004) have further elaborated on this view, adding that knowledge sharing is a process where individuals mutually exchange their knowledge and jointly create new knowledge.

Organizational knowledge consists of tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka et al, 2000). Both tacit and explicit knowledge are important and complementary to each other (Hass and Hansen, 2007) and essential for knowledge creation. Unfortunately, not most organizations handle explicit and tacit knowledge effectively (Bonner, 2000). Explicit knowledge without tacit insight quickly loses its value since it can be easily imitated by others so it needs to be shared with others so that new insights and learning will empower the knowledge. Tacit knowledge that cannot be codified and shared throughout the organization also has the potential to be lost when the person who holds it leaves the organization. Here, new knowledge or knowledge innovation is created through interactions between tacit and explicit knowledge and not from either tacit or explicit knowledge alone (Nonaka et al, 2000). So it is crucial to manage and share both kinds of knowledge accordingly since different knowledge brings different benefit to organizations (Hass and Hansen, 2007). This view brings a new perspective on the importance of different types of knowledge to different individuals, groups or units in organizations, making knowledge sharing activities critical to ensure that knowledge reaches those who need it.

However, knowledge sharing is not an easy process due to the fact that knowledge in organizations is often held by individuals, units or groups (collective forms) distributed (Argote and Ingram, 2000; Boland and Tenkasi, 1995; Hutchins, 1995; Weick and Roberts, 1993) all over the organization and sometimes across territorial borders. Furthermore, knowledge is recognised as being *socially-complex* (Sanchez and Heene, 1997; Nanda, 1996) since it is held by people and a personal relationship is needed in order to acquire it. It is regarded as *sticky* (Szulanski, 1996; Hippel, 1994) and *causally-ambiguous* (Sanchez and Heene, 1997) because it is embedded in a complex network of formal and informal relationships, thus making it difficult for organizations to share it effectively.

There are a number of factors leading towards the success of knowledge sharing, and among the individual factors are trust, knowledge self-efficacy and reciprocal benefits. Trust has several connotations in social context which basically could bring the meaning of a situation where one party is willing to rely on the actions of another party that can develop and evaluate expectations (Mayer et al., 1995). In sociology and psychology the degree one party trusts another is a measure of belief in the honesty, fairness, or benevolence of the other party (Bamberger, 2010).

Self-efficacy is the extent or strength of one's belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach the objectives (Ormrod, 2006). In other words, self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Bandura (1995) described these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel.

While reciprocal is generally related to relationship in which an act of one party is met or countered with a corresponding act. In social psychology, reciprocity is a social rule that says people should repay, in the same kind, what another person has provided for them (Caldini, 2006). It is about giving back (reciprocate) the same treatment one has received earlier from the second party.

Methodology

This study is in the form of a descriptive study, on the perceptions of academicians in a public university regarding impacts of organizational factors on knowledge sharing in HLIs. According to Wiersma (1995) this method is appropriate to measure or evaluate the attitude, perception and achievement of a program. The descriptive form is also used at par with the requirement of the study to understand in its real phenomenon (Mohd Majid 1990). Thus, a survey instrument is developed for this study based on the literatures selected. According to Tuckman (1999), a questionnaire is an effective way to gain information from the

respondents. All questions are in positive form and the respondents were required to state their perceptions according to the Likert scale.

This study is conducted through a set of survey instrument among acadmicians in a selected public university (codenamed UA). The academicians are selected from 5 faculties, 2 faculties representing pure sciences group and another 3 faculties representing social sciences group in UA. Thus, to determine the number of respondents, The Sample Size Determination Table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) is adopted. The sample size for this study is 38 based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970)'s Sample Size Determination.

In this study, the validity of the questionnaire is determined by an expert. Reliability refers to the stability and consistency in the instrument in measuring a particular concept. A popular test in measuring the consistency of a concept is the Cronbach Alpha. The reliability value of the Cronbach Alpha is between 0.0 and 1.0. According to Mohd Majid (1990), the Cronbach Alpha value more than 0.60 is often applied as the reliability index in a particular research. Thus, in this study, researcher has determined the Cronbach Alpha value that is more than 0.60 as the reliability value for every section of the questionnaire being tested. Next, to decide on the reliability value for the questionnaire given, researcher had carried out a pilot study.

The pilot study was done to identify the weaknesses and the strength in the questionnaire provided. Thus, before the questionnaire was given, 10 academicians were selected to answer the questionnaire first. The outcome obtained shows that all 10 academicians understand the questions clearly. Then, by using the *Statistical Package for the Social Science* (SPSS) program version 21, it is confirmed that the Cronbach Alpha value for all the items of the questions obtained more than 0.6. Thus, the questionnaire constructed to carry out this study is deemed appropriate to be used.

Findings and Discussions on Respondent Background

Table 1 below describe the background of respondents. The number of academicians from Pure Sciences comprises of 36.9 percent and Social Sciences academicians give a number of 63.1 percent. The respondents are majority from Senior Leturers (44.7 %) with 65% of all the respondents have been serving UA for more than 11 years. 73.7 percent of the respondents are PhD holders who possess expertise and knowledge in their respective fileds, with 34.2 percent of them experiencing conducting research between 6 to 10 years.

From the demographic data obtained, the field of expertise among UA academicians are generally divided into two; pure sciences and social sciences. For the position related to their post, they are categorized under the post of Professor, Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer and Lecturer. From the data, Senior Lecturers and Associate Professors make the majority with experience of work between 12 to 20 years of service with 6 to 10 years experiences in research. All the above indictors show to us that these academicians are in the process of climbing up their career development, which make truly important for them to share knowledge and create networking in their expertise to increase their research, publication and teaching.

Table 1: Respondent Background

$n = 38$	Numbers	Percentages
Name of institution		
Faculty Science & Technology	2	5.3
Faculty Technology & Information Science	12	31.6

Faculty Economics & Management	5	13.2
Faculty Social Science & Humanities	14	36.8
Faculty Islamic Studies	5	13.2
Position in this institution		
Professor	3	7.9
Associate Professor	9	23.7
Senior Lecturer	17	44.7
Lecturer	9	23.7
Years of working experience		
1-5	8	21.1
6-10	5	13.2
11-20	18	47.4
21 & above	7	18.4
Highest Educational Qualification		
Doctoral Degree	28	73.7
Master's Degree	7	18.4
Bachelor Degree	3	7.9
Years in Conducting Research Work		
1 year & below	2	5.3
2 - 5 years	7	18.4
6 - 10 years	13	34.2
11 - 15 years	8	21.1
16 - 20 years	4	10.5
21 - 25 years	2	5.3
26 years & above	2	5.3

Findings and Discussions on Trust

Table 2 below describe elements of Trust in Knowledge Sharing. From the data, 92.1 percent of academicians in UA agreed that trust in their faculty are expertise in their area, followed by 81.6 percent of UA academicians willing to help each other when facing any difficulties, while 76.3 percent of UA academicians are competent in their area.

Academicians in UA also believe (68.4%) are sincere and honest to help each other but only around 55.3 percent of academicians having mutual reciprocal faith.

These findings in general show that UA academicians are both expert and competent in their areas. This lead towards better trust gained from other academicians who lead towards better knowledge sharing. Consequently, academicians are preferred to consult among each other when facing difficulties. Furthermore, when they help each other's, they will engage with full of sincerity and honesty. All in all, trust is vital in promoting knowledge sharing among academicians. This is in line with Hardin (2002) which put the important of trust to frame the dynamics of inter-group and intra-group interactions in term of sharing.

Table 2: Trust

No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Less Agree	Agree
1	I trust my faculty/school's academicians in having mutual reciprocal faith.	3(7.9)	14(36.8)	21(55.3)
2	I trust that academicians in my faculty/school are expertise in their areas.	0(0.0)	3(7.9)	35(92.1)
3	I prefer to ask the academicians in my faculty/school for help when I face any difficulties.	0(0.0)	7(18.4)	31(81.6)
4	I believe that the academicians in my faculty/school are sincere and honest to help.	1(2.6)	11(28.9)	26(68.4)
5	I believe that academicians in my faculty/school are competence in their area.	1(2.6)	8(21.1)	29(76.3)

Findings and Discussions on Knowledge Self-Efficacy

Table 3 below also describe the Knowledge Self-Efficacy of Knowledge Sharing in UA. The academicians generally agree that they have the expertise required to provide valuable knowledge to their fellow academics (89.5%). This equally echoed related to confident in ability to provide knowledge to other academics (86.8%), providing difference when sharing knowledge (86.8%), and participate in knowledge sharing to improve the reputation as an academic (71.1%). On the contrary, the respondents are slightly agree on provide more valuable knowledge than most of their academic fellows in their school / faculty (55.3%).

These findings show that the academicians are highly confident and have strong abilities and capabilities in themesleves. This is inline with Luszczynska & Schwarzer (2005) that say by determining the beliefs a person holds regarding his or her power to affect situations, it strongly influences both the power a person actually has to face challenges competently and the choices a person is most likely to make. Moreover, when sharing knowledge, the academicians feel happy and believe their reputations are increased and recognised. However, the academicans should incrase their self-efficacy through providing more valuable knowledge in their respective institutions.

Table 3: Knowledge Self-Efficacy

No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Less Agree	Agree
1	I am confident in my ability to provide knowledge to other academics in my faculty/school.	2(5.3)	3(7.9)	33(86.8)
2	I have the expertise required to provide valuable knowledge to academics in my faculty/school.	0(0.0)	4(10.5)	34(89.5)
3	It does make a difference when I share my knowledge with other academics in my faculty/school.	1(2.6)	4(10.5)	33(86.8)
4	I can provide more valuable knowledge than most of my academics in my faculty/school.	5(13.2)	12(31.6)	21(55.3)
5	I participate in knowledge sharing to improve my reputation as an academic in this university.	1(2.6)	10(26.3)	27(71.1)

Findings and Discussions on Reciprocal Benefit

Table 4 below describe Reciprocal Benefit of Knowledge Sharing in UA among the academicians. The academicians agree that when sharing knowledge with other academicians, it will strengthen the knowledge capability between both parties (89.5%). The academicians also perceive that the association with other academicians are expanded when sharing knowledge (86.8%), feeling of belonging in one entity (78.9%), future request form knowledge will bw answered (68.4%) and the expectation to receive knowledge when necessary (66.8%).

This findings show us that the practice of knowledge sharing in UA is fulfilled in term of reciprocity. Among academicians on both parties of knowledge sharing feel that they gain reciprocal benefit when they share knowledge with each other. These findings is consistent with Caldini (2006) who mentioned that reciprocity is a social rule which point out that people should repay, in kind, what another person has provided for them. This benefit is as well supported by the factors of trust and self-efficacy.

Table 4: Reciprocal Benefit

No	Item	Strongly Agree	Less Agree	Agree
1	When I share my knowledge with academics at my faculty/school, I strengthen them and myself.	0(0.0)	3(7.9)	34(89.5)
2	When I share my knowledge with other academics in my faculty/school, I expand the scope associating myself with them.	0(0.0)	5(13.2)	33(86.8)
3	When I share my knowledge with academics in my faculty/school, I expect to receive	4(10.5)	9(23.7)	25(65.8)

	knowledge in return when necessary.			
4	When I share my knowledge with academics in my faculty/school, I believe that my future request for knowledge will be answered.	1(2.6)	11(28.9)	26(68.4)
5	When I share my knowledge with academics at my faculty/school, I feel that we belong to one entity.	0(0.0)	8(21.1)	30(78.9)

Conclusions

From the data and analysis discussed above, this study shows that knowledge sharing practices among Malaysian academicians (particularly in UA), are strongly related with the individual factors of "trust", "knowledge self-efficacy" and "reciprocal benefit". Therefore, every academician should possess all the three aspects of "trust", "knowledge self-efficacy" and "reciprocal benefit"; to make knowledge sharing practice run smoothly. All in all, from the general findings, it is found that in the area of individual humbleness and modesty there is still room for improvement as well as mutual reciprocal faith. This goes along with the inferior feelings of capability to give more valuable knowledge than others academicians. This approach is meant for better knowledge sharing practice to be achieved.

In fact, the individual factors of knowledge sharing will boost the UA key areas, which are namely; to produce graduates with national aspiration, competent and innovative; high impact in research and innovation; smart partnership and strategic networking; excellent human resources and institutions; optimum income generating and strategic; and holistic conducive environment infrastructure. Above all, the success of knowledge sharing will surely drive a higher level of academic standards and better quality of education providers at large.

References

Abell, A. & Oxbrow, N. (2001). Competing with knowledge: the information professional in the knowledge management age. London: Library Association Publishing.

Albert, S. & Bradley, K. (1997). Managing knowledge: Experts, agencies and organizations. Cambridge: Cambrige University Press.

Bamberger, Walter (2010). "Interpersonal Trust – Attempt of a Definition". Scientific report, Technische Universität München.

Bandura, A. (1995). Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Bartol, K. M. & Srivastava, A. (2002) Encouraging Knowledge Sharing: The Role of Organizational Reward Systems, Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, 9(1), 64-76.

Bock, G. W. & Kim, Y. G. (2002) Breaking the Myths of Rewards: An Exploratory Study of Attitudes about Knowledge Sharing, Information Resources about Management Journal, 15(2), 14-21.

Brown, J. S. & Duguid, P (2000) The Social Life of Information. Harvard Business Press.

Cabrera, A. & Cabrera, E. F. (2002) Knowledge Sharing Dilemmas, Organization Studies, 23(5), 687-710.

Cabrera, A. & Cabrera, E. F. (2005) Fostering Knowledge Sharing through People Management Practices, International Journal of Human Resource Management, 16(5), 720-735.

Chiu, C. M., Hsu, M.H, & Wang. E. T. G. (2006) Understanding Knowledge Sharing in Virtual Communities: An Integration of Social Capital and Social Cognitive Theories, Decision Support Systems, 4293), 1872-1888.

Cialdini, R. (2006). Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion. Harper Business; Revised Edition

Davenport, T. H. (1997). Knowledge Management at Ernst and Young,

Davenport, T.H. & Prusak, L. (1998). Working Knowledge: How Organizations Manage What They Know, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

Davenport, T.H., De Long, D.W. & Beers, M.C. (1998), Successful knowledge management projects. Sloan Management Review, 39:2, 43-57.

Gagne, M. (2009) A Model of Knowledge Sharing Motivation, Human Resource Management, 48(4), 571-589.

Grant, R.M. (1996), Prospering in Dynamically-Competitive Environments: Organizational Capability as Knowledge Integration. Organization Science, 7:4, 375-387.

Gupta, A. K. & Govindarajan, V. (2000) Knowledge Management's Social Dimension: Lessons form Nucor Steel. MIT Sloan Management Review, 42(1), 71-81.

Hardin, R. (eds.) (2002). Trust and trustworthiness. Russell Sage Foundation.

Heng, L.H. (2005), Perkongsian pengetahuan di syarikat pengedaran kereta nasional Malaysia, paper presented at the National Conference of Management of Technology and Technology Entrepreneurship, Johor Bharu, Johor.

Hislop, D. (2003) Linking Human Resource Management and Knowledge Management via Commitment, Employee Relations, 25(2), 182-202.

Ipe, M. (2003), Knowledge sharing in organizations: a conceptual framework, Human Resource Development Review, Vol. 2 No. 4, 337-59.

Kim, S. & Lee, H. (2005), Employee Knowledge Sharing Capabilities in Public and Private Organizations: Does Organizational Context Matter? Proceedings of the 38th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences 2005.

Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. (1970), Determining sample size for research activities. Educational and Psychology Measurement. 30(3).

Luszczynska, A., & Schwarzer, R. (2005). Social cognitive theory. In M. Conner & P. Norman (Eds.), Predicting health behaviour (2nd ed. rev., pp. 127–169). Buckingham, England: Open University Press.

Mayer, R.C., Davis J.H., Schoorman F.D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. Academy of Management Review. 20 (3), 709-734.

McDermott, R. & O'Dell, C. (2001) Overcoming Culture Barriers to Sharing Knowledge, Journal of Knowledge Management, 5(1), 76-85.

Mohd Majid Konting (1990), Kaedah Penyelidikan Pendidikan. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Nonaka, (1994), A dynamic theory of organizational knowledge creation. Organization Science 5:1, 14–37.

Ormrod, J. E. (2006). Educational psychology: Developing learners (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall

Park, H., Ribeire, V. & Schulte, W. D. (2004) Critical Attributes of Organizational Culture that Promote Knowledge Management Technology Implementation Success, Journal of Knowledge Management, 8(3), 106-117.

Petrides, L. & Nodine, T. (2003), KM in Education: Defining the Landscape, Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education, Half Moon Bay, CA.

Quinn, J.B, Anderson, P., & Finkelstein, S (1996) Managing professional intellect: making the most of the best. Harvard Business Review, 71-80.

Roca, J.C. & Gagne, M. (2008) Understanding E-Learning Continuance Intention in the Workplace: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective, Computers in Human Behavior, 24(4), 1596-1604

Tuckman, B.W. (1999), Conducting Educational Research. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Wasako, M. & Faraj, S. (2000). It is what one does: why people participate and help others in electronic communities of practice. Journal of Strategic Information Systems, 9:1, 155-173.

Wiersma, W. (1995), Research Methods in Education: An Introduction. Boston Allyn and Bacon