

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF JAMMU

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge management and sharing of knowledge has been emerged as one of the most important area in management practices and established as a basic resource for organisations and economies. As more and more information and knowledge is created and exchanged, the world has become more knowledge-oriented. As in the business organisations, the concepts of knowledge management practices and knowledge sharing is slowly gaining acceptance in the education sector. For creating the culture of sharing knowledge in the organisations, there is a need for good knowledge management practices. The present study is an attempt to study the concept of knowledge management practices and knowledge sharing. Also, the given study tries to evaluate the knowledge management practices (perception, trust, openness in communication, collaboration, reward systems, communication channels and material sharing) and sharing of this knowledge among the research scholars of University of Jammu.

Keywords: Knowledge management, Knowledge sharing, Knowledge management practices and knowledge-orientation

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge Management and sharing of Knowledge has been emerged as one of the most important area in management practices and established as a basic resource for organisations and economies. It has been seen, since last decade or so that there has an increasing interest in managing knowledge in the organisations. As more and more information and knowledge is created and exchanged, the world has become more knowledge-oriented. This is due to the rapid development of information systems and technologies which enable organisations to manage their knowledge assets more effectively. The organisations of late, have realized that the intellectual capital or the corporate knowledge is a valuable asset which can be managed as well as shared effectively to improve the management practices. Besides, it also enables organisations to gain competitive advantage. Thus, information and knowledge is critical not only for competitive existence but also for the sustainability of the organisations.

Knowledge management in general, defined as collection, distribution and efficient use of knowledge resources. It is a process of knowledge creation, validation, presentation,

VOLUME NO.1, ISSUE NO.9

ISSN 2277-1166

distribution and evaluation. According to Bounfour (2003), Knowledge management is a set of procedures, infrastructures and technical and managerial tools, designed towards creating, sharing, leveraging information and knowledge within and across organizations. Knowledge Management is a systematic and integrative process of coordinating organization wide activities of acquiring, creating, storing, sharing, diffusing and deploying knowledge by individuals and groups, in pursuit of organizational goals. Thus, Knowledge management is concerned with the exploitation and development of the knowledge assets of an organization with a view to fulfill the organization's objectives. Organizations that succeed in knowledge management are likely to view knowledge as an important asset and to develop organizational norms and values, which supports the creation and sharing of knowledge.

Knowledge sharing is an activity through which knowledge (i.e. information, skills, or expertise) is exchanged among people, peers, community or an organization. Knowledge-sharing is the process of being aware of knowledge needs and making knowledge available to others by constructing and providing technical and systematic infrastructure. Its prime objective is making knowledge available to the users who need it at any time. Thus, Knowledge sharing has become an important focus in the strategic management field, where knowledge is seen as the most strategically-important resource which organizations possess (Grant, 1996). Knowledge-sharing between individuals is the process by which knowledge possessed by one individual is converted into a form that can be understood and used by others (Ipe, 2003).

Thus, from the above studies it can be deduced that there exists a relationship between Knowledge management practices and Knowledge Sharing of the individuals in the organisation. Since, a lot of research has been done on the knowledge management as well as knowledge sharing in different perspectives; the present study is an attempt to study the relationship between knowledge management practices and knowledge sharing.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the proposed study are as under:-

1. To study the concept of Knowledge Management and Knowledge Sharing.
2. To examine to what extent the individuals of the select university individuals share the knowledge among themselves.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The current literature demonstrates that effective management of knowledge and their proper dissemination to the users are critical for the knowledge based organisations. Toffler (1990) considered knowledge as the essence of power in information age. In the given study, he pointed out that the current trend is for people to transition from pursuing wealth to controlling information and refining it into more general statements. Davenport, De Long, & Beers (1998) viewed knowledge as experience, context, judgment, belief, and information; they stated that it is the most strategically important resource that organizations possess. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) said that knowledge is about beliefs, commitment, and action, which distinguishes it from information. Like information, knowledge is about meaning that is context-specific and relational. Thus, Knowledge management refers to the overall process of activities affecting knowledge: creating, capturing, identifying, organizing, storing,

representing, transferring, and reusing knowledge. Specifically, knowledge management in organizations is a process of acquiring and recreating various forms of knowledge scattered throughout organizations, then preserving and reusing them in support of organizational goals. In other words, KM is obtaining the right information for the right people at the right time so that people create, share, and act on the information (Holm, 2001). Also, Knowledge management process is commonly defined as consisting of five phases: knowledge creation, preservation, sharing, reuse, and evaluation. Thus, in the view of the present study here we are focusing on the sharing of the Knowledge.

The study of knowledge sharing has its roots within the technology transfer and innovation literature. Knowledge-sharing means being aware of knowledge needs, constructing technical and systematic infrastructure, and making knowledge available to others who need it. Knowledge-sharing between individuals is the process by which knowledge possessed by one individual is converted into a form that can be understood and used by others (Ipe, 2003). The effectiveness of knowledge-sharing in organizations can be a significant factor to successful organizational management. Kang and Kim (1999) and Dixon (2000) viewed knowledge-sharing as the flow of knowledge from someone who has it to someone wants it. Findings show that expected associations and contributions, rather than rewards, are major determinants of attitudes toward knowledge-sharing (Kim and Ju, 2008). At the organizational and technical levels, the study by Kim and Lee (2006) examined the impact of organizational context and information technology (IT) on employees' perceptions of knowledge-sharing in 10 private and public sector organizations. Findings drawn from statistical data analysis revealed that IT application usage was the most significant factor influencing employee knowledge-sharing.

Oosterlink and Leuven (2002) pointed out that, in the era of knowledge society and a knowledge economy, universities have a major role to play. In other words, universities are faced with a challenge to better create and disseminate knowledge to society. Universities seek to share information and knowledge among the academic community within the organisation. Knowledge management has become a key issue in universities due to changes in knowledge cultures. Oosterlink and Leuven (2002) argued that, Universities are no longer living in splendid isolation, they have their own place in society, and they have a responsibility to society, which expects something in return for privileges it has granted. In other words, Universities do not exist as single entities. They are part of society through engaging in teaching, research and community service. Therefore, the knowledge created in universities through research and teaching should be relevant to the labour market. It may be noted that the university is concerned with the conservation of knowledge and ideas; teaching, research, publication, extension and services and interpretation (Budd, 1998; Ratcliffe-Martin, Coakes & Sugden, 2000). Taking into consideration the wide spectrum of the Universities which deals with knowledge as well as the common mass using the knowledge, the present study is an attempt to study the Knowledge Management Practices and Knowledge sharing among the individuals of Jammu University. Also, it has been seen from the existing literature that sharing of the knowledge is essential component of the Knowledge management practices. The given study also focuses to what extent the individuals of the select university individuals share the knowledge among themselves.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology deals with the sources of data, sample size, instrument to be used and statistical tools to be applied for the data analysis. The study has been conducted in the University of Jammu, Jammu. The respondents of this research study comprised of the Scholar of the select University. Primary data has been collected by means of a questionnaire. After thorough review of literature, a questionnaire has been developed which includes the dimensions of Knowledge Management Practices and Knowledge sharing. For the purpose of present study a total of 60 research scholar has been selected from University of Jammu. The Secondary data has been collected from various books, journals, annual reports, magazines, newspapers, published papers, websites and other resources etc.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The study deals with the analysis of Knowledge Management and sharing of Knowledge among the research scholar of University of Jammu. The responses from the respondents were subjected to simple percentage method and mean score methods.

Demographic Profile

For the purpose of the study about the demographic profile of the research scholar, simple percentage method was used. The data shows that 58% of the total respondents were females and 42% constitutes males. In terms of age, majority of respondents (72%) ranging between 25-28 years. About 21% research scholars have their age between 28-32 years and only 7% respondents are below 25 years. It has been seen that about 47% of research scholar their tenure of work as a scholar is less than 2 yrs, 41% have 2-3 years and 12% research scholar have their tenure more than 3 years. Regarding their monthly family income, more than half i.e. 68% of research scholars have monthly family income more than Rs.45,000, 27.5% have monthly family income ranging between Rs. 35,000 to Rs.45,000 and 4.5% have below Rs.35,000.

Table 1. Perception

Sr.No.	Perception	Means
1	Importance of sharing teaching materials	3.25
2	Necessary to share teaching materials	3.58
3	Sharing helps to prepare class related works	3.22
4	Actively share research materials	2.92
5	Actively share teaching materials	2.34

As shown in the Table 1, it has been seen that mean scores of item necessary to share teaching materials is maximum i.e. 3.58, followed by awareness of importance of sharing teaching materials (3.25), sharing helps to prepare class related works (3.22), followed by research scholars actively share research materials (2.92) and least in case of research scholars actively share teaching materials (2.34). Thus, it has been revealed that Research scholars are more aware of sharing research and teaching related material as compare to actively sharing of these resources.

Table 2. Trust

Sr.No.	Trust	Means
1	I trust my colleagues in general	3.67
2	I trust the expertise of my colleagues	3.98
3	Share important information and knowledge	4.20
4	Willing to ask colleagues for help	3.56
5	Provide valuable information & knowledge	3.24

Table 2, shown above indicates that share important information and knowledge has maximum mean score (4.2), followed by I trust the expertise of my colleagues (3.98), I trust my colleagues in general (3.67), followed by willing to ask colleagues for help (3.56) and provide valuable information and knowledge (3.24). Since, the mean scores of all the items are above average, it shows that there is a great sense of trust among the research scholars of University of Jammu.

Table 3. Openness in communication

Sr.No.	Openness in communication	Means
1	Free and open communication	4.30
2	Exchange of academic information	3.95
3	I do not hesitate to share information	4.00
4	Colleagues don't hesitate share information	3.50
5	Willing share or provide information	3.15
6	Share pedagogies and teaching materials	3.95

The table-3 indicates that there is free and open communication among the scholars as all the items has mean scores above average. Free and open communication has maximum mean score (4.30), followed by I do not hesitate to share information or knowledge (4). Both exchange of academic information or knowledge and share pedagogies and teaching materials have same mean score (3.95), followed by colleagues do not hesitate to share information (3.50) and actively willing to share or provide information (3.15).

Table 4. Collaboration and Reward systems

Sr.No.	Collaboration and Reward systems	Means
1	Prefer working collaboratively to alone	3.25
2	Prefer working with other people or groups	3.60
3	University provides fair evaluation/reward systems	2.59
4	Knowledge sharing is measured with fairness	3.49

Table 4 shows that Knowledge sharing is measured with fairness (3.49) has maximum mean score followed by prefer working with other people or groups (3.60), prefer working collaboratively to working alone (3.25), University provides fair evaluation/reward systems (2.59). The table shows that there has been a good collaboration and reward systems in the University system.

Table 5. Communication channel

Sr.No.	Communication channel	Means
1	Communication channel for sharing	3.15
2	Difficulties in existing channel	3.22

As shown in the table 5, that difficulties has been found in the existing communication channel having mean score 3.22 followed by there exists communication channel for sharing knowledge (3.15). Thus, there is a need to cater the difficulties which exists in the communication channels.

Table 6. Material sharing

Sr.No.	Material sharing	Means
1	Willing to share course materials with colleagues	3.45
2	Accept and use course materials from colleagues	3.05

Table 6 shows sharing of material among the research scholars. It has been found that willing to share course materials with colleagues has maximum mean score (3.45) followed by accept and use course materials from colleagues (3.05).

CONCLUSION

Thus, it has been concluded that research scholars of University of Jammu are aware of sharing resources (research as well as teaching). There is a great sense of trust as free and open communication among the scholars has been found. Also, there has been a good collaboration and reward systems in the University system. In addition to this, it has been found that there is need to cater the difficulties which exist in the communication channels. Thus, it has been concluded that Knowledge management practices and Knowledge sharing are very important assets of any knowledge-based organisation. As in the business organisations, the concepts of Knowledge management practices and Knowledge sharing has been gaining acceptance in the education sector. Oosterlink and Leuven (2002) pointed out that, in the era of knowledge society and a knowledge economy, it is clear that universities have a major role to play. In other words, universities are faced with a challenge to better create and disseminate knowledge to the society.

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