

Impact of Organisational Knowledge Sharing on Innovative Work Behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd

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Abstract

This research is a study of the knowledge sharing factors that influence innovative work behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd. ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd is facing inefficiencies, high attrition and loss of profit due to its lack of knowledge sharing, which hampers the organisation's ability to innovate. This study has selected knowledge sharing variables that influence innovative work behaviour based on current research publications. These variables are: team work, management support, trust, knowledge-based rewards, and self-efficacy. Five hypotheses were formulated based on the chosen variables. A questionnaire was distributed to 124 employees of ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd to obtain their feedback on how knowledge sharing influences innovative work behaviour. The primary data that was collected was used to test the hypotheses. Based on the correlation analysis results, management support and trust have a positive correlation with innovative work behaviour. Based on multiple linear regression results, trust is the most significant variable. The degree of satisfaction with the variables that influence knowledge sharing was low. Thus, this study has revealed that there is a clear problem with knowledge sharing in the organisation, which in return adversely affects innovative work behaviour. Based on the research findings, recommendations are made on how to improve knowledge sharing in order to improve innovative work behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd. Suggestions for future research are also presented.

Keywords: Innovative Work Behaviour, Organisational Knowledge, Knowledge Sharing

1. Introduction

Global competition on innovation, trends, technology, and consumer demands are in rapid change where organisations seek for competitive opportunities for survival through innovation. Therefore, organisations bear the responsibility of improving innovative behaviour of employees by creating value to achieve market efficiency and customer loyalty. Organisation innovation capacity and ability towards continuous innovation on product, services, and workflows is essential for an organisation to remain competitive in the market. Therefore, innovation is considered as a general learning trend for a successful organisation by focusing less on specific innovation projects and more on general innovation trends that build innovative capacities. The researchers agree that organisational innovation is the key to obtain competitive advantage and strategic

innovation. Therefore, employees are an important resource for organisations to develop, respond and modify initiatives which play an important role in organisational innovation which is known as innovative work behaviour. Further, for employees to be innovative, organisations must manage and develop an internal environment and relevant knowledge that supports knowledge sharing and innovative nature of their employee behaviour. Moreover, knowledge sharing impacts a company's innovation capacity and improves the innovative working behaviour. In recent years, lack of organisational knowledge sharing reported and caused obstacles to the organization, as ABC Trading experienced a high attrition rate at different levels of the organisation. As a result, ABC Trading became less competitive in the industry, and employee performance deteriorated. Creativity, learning and innovation of employees were hampered due to this issue. In addition, employees started

to ignore the company's best problem solving experiences due to lack of guidance and knowledge. Therefore, the study is conducted based on an ongoing problem within ABC Trading under the topic 'impact of organisational knowledge sharing on innovative work behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd' using a sample of 124 in the operations department.

1.1 Research Problem

ABC Trading organisation is engaged in developing and implementing projects focusing on providing innovative products and services. Project-based organisations have gained reputation in the modern economy due to flexibility, innovation and well-equipped methods to overcome barriers towards organisational change, which has the ability to respond in a timely manner. Therefore, project teams possess an effective knowledge sharing and creation, as the organisation is providing the project teams the freedom and the environment to perform their tasks. Based on employee feedback, the management is not supportive and does not share knowledge. This makes employees hoard knowledge and within the past few years, the lack of efficiency, productivity and conflicts between the employees have increased. The profitability of the organisation has declined as result of lack of organisational knowledge resource sharing. This has caused obstacles to the organisation, as ABC Trading is currently experiencing high absenteeism and attrition rate at different levels of the organisation. Consequently, ABC Trading experienced a decline in competitiveness within the industry with employee grapple in areas such as creativity, learning and innovative results. In addition, employees started ignoring the company's best problem-solving experiences due to lack of guidance and knowledge.

The ABC Trading Operation team is involved in projects where they require innovative knowledge. The employees are facing difficulties in grasping knowledge from the organisation due to various barriers. Lack of knowledge sharing within ABC trading organization has caused attrition, as the organisation did not establish solutions in order to make the organisation competitive in the industry. Therefore, this research will help the

current organisation to understand the reasons for the organisation's attrition and employee low performance and come up with solutions, benefiting both the organisation and the employees to achieve their career goals.

1.2 Research Aim - The research aim of this study is to understand the relationship between organizational knowledge sharing and innovative work behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd.

2. Methodology

This study used the quantitative research methodology.

2.1 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework used to formulate the hypotheses for this study is given below.

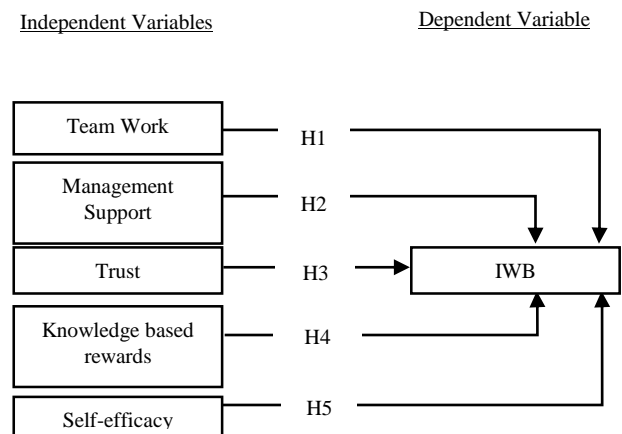


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2.2 Hypotheses development

H1 - There is a positive relationship between teamwork and innovative work behaviour

Team work within an organisation generates productive outputs by connecting individual knowledge, expertise and creativity to form innovative work behaviour (Park et al., 2006). Knowledge based and innovation-based organisations engaging in complex operations require collective output and innovative work behaviour (Hauschildt & Kirchmann, 2001). Therefore, team work enables employees to brainstorm knowledge, generate multiple ideas and to identify problematic gaps from different point of views and to generate solutions for multiple problems, which can provide a unique solution (McCrae & Terracciano, 2005).

H2 - There is a positive relationship between management support and innovative work behavior

Management support encourages idea generation and provides employees training opportunities which increases employee motivation, positive behaviour, and promotes innovative work behaviour (Tallman et al., 2004). The lack of management support isolates employees without an idea as what to perform and will not be able to understand management expectations, which can cause incorrect task performance of employees, demotivation and lack of innovative work behaviour (Aulawi et al., 2005).

H3 - There is a positive relationship between trust and innovative work behavior

A high level of trust generates positive attitude on other colleagues and generates mutual understanding with colleagues which leads to innovation (Shan & Zhang, 2009). Trust creates the environment for employees to express ideas freely, willingness to share knowledge, improves commitment and employee loyalty (Chen & Hunag, 2009). Hence, a lack of trust generates thoughts of distrust and leads to knowledge hoarding.

H4 - There is a positive relationship between knowledge based rewards and innovative work behavior

Employees' positive attitude towards innovative work behaviour increases when they benefit from promotion, recognitions, monetary rewards, and learning opportunities (Lee & Ahn, 2007). Aulawi et al. (2005) state that employees being aware of the rewards available for innovative work behaviour, will encourage them to share knowledge and innovate.

H5 - There is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and innovative work behavior

Employees with high self-efficacy engage in creative practices and activities (Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2007). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) state that low self-efficacy is caused through lack of training, lack of rewards, trust, support and acceptance from other colleagues. As a result, employees are frustrated and are less motivated to perform a task, develop a lack

of confidence and develops anxiety problems (Gong et al., 2009).

2.3. Operationalization Table

Table 1 gives the dimensions used to measure the independent and dependent variables.

Table 1. Operationalization table

Variable	Dimension	Source
Teamwork	Mutual communication	(Prieto & Santa, 2014)
	Attitudes	(Kamasak & Bulutlar, 2010)
	Willingness	(Kamasak & Bulutlar, 2010)
Management support	Organisation support	(Wang & Wang, 2012)
	Job training	(Kamasak & Bulutlar, 2010)
	Skill development	(Kamasak & Bulutlar, 2010)
Trust	Mutual trust	(Wang & Wang, 2012)
	Transparency Positive attitude	(Kamasak & Bulutlar, 2010)
Knowledge based rewards	Rewards	(Patricia, 2001),
	Recognitions	(Prieto & Santana, 2014)
	Positive attitudes	(Prieto & Santana, 2014)
Self-efficacy	Capability	(Shao et al., 2015)
	Confidence	(Chow & Chan, 2008)
	Commitment	(Chow & Chan, 2008)
Innovative work behaviour	Job-fit New ideas Innovation implementation	(Afsar, Badir & Khan, 2015)
		(Prieto & Sanatna, 2014)

2.4 Population and Sampling

The population of this study is 180 employees from the operations unit at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd. This study used the convenience sampling technique. Based on the Morgan table, for a

population of 180, the sample size should be 123, therefore a sample size of 124 was chosen.

2.5 Data Collection

To gather primary data, a Likert scale based structured questionnaire containing closed ended statements was used. The questionnaire consisted of statements to get feedback about knowledge sharing factors and demographic data of the respondents. The questionnaire was distributed using Google Forms.

2.6 Data Analysis

SPSS statistic software was used for data validity analysis, correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis.

3. Analysis and Findings

3.1 Response Rate

A total of 124 questionnaires were distributed to the chosen respondents. All of the respondents answered the questionnaire. Therefore, a response rate of 100% was achieved.

3.2 Demographic Data

The demographic data of the respondents are given below, gathered through the survey questionnaire.

Table 2. Demographic Data

Age	
18-20	3%
21-25	8%
26-30	73%
31-45	16%
Educational qualification	
No formal higher education	13%
Undergraduates	23.18%
Graduates	88.71%
Other	1.1%
Designation	
Intern	1%
Junior Executives	2%
Executive	72%
Senior executive level	23%
Supervisory level	2%
Years of work experience at ABC Trading	
Less than one year	5%
01-05 years	85%
06-10 years	9%
More than 10 years	1%

3.3 Reliability analysis

Table 3 provides the Cronbach's alpha values, which was used to analyze the internal consistency of the questionnaire items.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha Values

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Teamwork	0.6
Management Support	0.6
Trust	0.6
Knowledge based rewards	0.5
Self-efficacy	0.1
Innovative Work Behaviour	0.7

According to the reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha values are acceptable, if they are 0.6 or above. Therefore, the data can be considered to be reliable (except for Self-efficacy). The Cronbach alpha value for Self-efficacy is 0.1. The majority of the respondents' rated 'Agree' as their self-rating on Self-efficacy. Self-ratings are not an accurate measure due to the tendency for respondents to show that they possess socially desirable traits

and therefore, the respondents are capable of exaggerating their skills and abilities.

3.4 Correlation Analysis

This study utilized the Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient to measure the relationship between both variables.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis

Innovative work behaviour		
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (5%)
Team work	0.126	0.163
Management Support	0.219	0.015
Trust	0.266	0.003
Knowledge Based Rewards	0.044	0.627
Self-efficacy	-0.114	0.209

As shown in Table 4, the correlation analysis (at 5% sig. level) reveals that only Management Support and Trust have a positive correlation with Innovative Work Behaviour.

H1: There is a positive relationship between teamwork and innovative work behaviour

H1 is not supported by this study.

This result is supported by Xerri and Reid (2017). The study found that teamwork does not have a significant impact on innovative work behavior, however the study stated that efficiency, effectiveness and training opportunities are influential towards innovative work behaviour. Twigg et al. (2010) and Aitken et al. (2012) stated that teamwork creates less significant impact on innovative work behavior, whereas job satisfaction and the work environment were more important.

H2: There is a positive relationship between management support and innovative work behaviour

H2 is supported by this study.

The above identified relationship is supported by past literature where Yu et al. (2004) proclaims that management support influences employees to create and maintain positive principals and innovative work behaviour. Bakker et al. (2003) states that management

support within an organisation is important to help employees cope with responsibilities, share knowledge and create a positive impact on organisational performance and improve innovative work behaviour. Jimmieson et al. (2009) show that management support results in employees' positive attitude towards knowledge sharing and innovative work behaviour.

H3: There is a positive relationship between trust and innovative work behaviour

H3 is supported by this study.

The above mentioned relationship has been confirmed by the studies of Dirks and Ferrin (2001), which state that trust leads to transparency and influences employees' abilities and positive attitudes on knowledge sharing. Further, several studies have shown a positive impact of trust towards innovative work behavior (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Reagans & Mcevily, 2003).

H4: There is a positive relationship between knowledge-based rewards and innovative work behaviour

H4 is not supported by this study.

Recent research has suggested that knowledge based rewards create less impact on innovative work behavior, as rewards and integrity in the workplace is a condition that suppresses and facilitates employee behaviour (Konovsky & Organ, 1996; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Milne (2001) stated that there is no positive correlation between knowledge based rewards and innovative work behaviour, because knowledge based rewards are usually more focused on knowledge retention and are less influential towards innovative work behaviour.

H5: There is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and innovative work behaviour

H5 is not supported by this study.

Henson (2001) found a weak correlation between self-efficacy and innovative work behaviour. Razak et al. (2016) suggests that self-efficacy influences individual motivation and desire to perform knowledge sharing and is influential towards innovative work behaviour.

3.5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple Linear Regression analysis was conducted to identify the most significant variables impacting innovative work behaviour. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta	Sig. (5%)
Team Work	0.04	0.672
Management Support	0.07	0.561
Trust	0.266	0.003
Knowledge Based Rewards	-0.063	0.508
Self-Efficacy	-0.036	0.693

Based on the regression analysis results, at 5% significance level, Trust is the most significant variable that has a positive correlation with Innovative Work Behaviour. The regression model has a R square value of 0.07.

3.6. Average Ratings

Table 6 gives the average rating for each of the variables used in the study based on the response analysis.

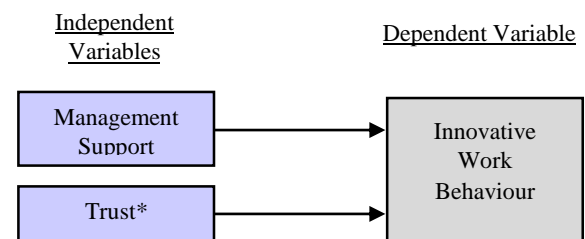
Table 6. Average Ratings

Variable	Average rating	Average value
Teamwork	Disagree	2
Management Support	Disagree	2
Trust	Disagree	2
Knowledge based rewards	Neutral	3
Self-efficacy	Agree	4

Based on the average ratings, it is clear that the average ratings given by the respondents for team work, management support, trust and innovative work behaviour was “dissatisfied”. The average rating for knowledge-based rewards was “neutral”. The average rating for self-efficacy was “agree”. Thus, it is evident that overall, the respondents are dissatisfied with the factors that contribute to innovative work behaviour.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, as shown in Figure 2, this study has found that out of the five independent variables studied (team work, management support, trust, knowledge-based rewards and self-efficacy) only management support and trust have a positive correlation with innovative work behaviour. The other variables have no correlation with innovative work behaviour. Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that trust is the most significant variable. The average ratings given by the respondents for team work, management support, trust and innovative work behaviour was “dissatisfied”. The average rating for knowledge based rewards was “neutral”. The average rating for self-efficacy was “agree”. Thus, it is evident that overall, the respondents are dissatisfied with the knowledge sharing factors that contribute to innovative work behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd. These results clearly show that there is a lack of innovative work behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd.



Note: Trust is the most significant variable.

Figure 2. Factors influencing Innovative Work Behaviour at ABC Trading (Pvt) Ltd

5. Recommendations

Recommendations to improve trust

Each employee generates new ideas and opinions; therefore, the management should add their ideas to a common pool. This will create a foundation upon which to build a work place based on mutual trust and understanding. Employees will learn to trust one another, when they see that everyone is committed, shares their ideas and knowledge freely and works towards a common goal. As stated by Meyer and Maltin (2010), trust influences employee engagement on innovative work behaviour to produce a productive outcome. Employees should be taken out for lunch or team building

programs, as it builds trust and creates space for personal understanding and friendship. Frequent recognitions, appreciation should be awarded to the employees for collaborative efforts, which will encourage employees to trust each other and share their ideas to achieve a common goal.

Recommendations to improve management support

According to Lin (2007), teams with better management support will work better as a team and contribute to knowledge sharing more productively. Management support can be developed by creating credibility, by being respectful and making fair decisions. When employees are engaged in a task, the management should influence the employee to think innovatively by valuing their new ideas.

Recommendations to improve teamwork

According to Aulawi et al. (2009), teamwork enables employees to understand the importance of knowledge sharing with other colleagues. Plessis (2007) affirms, best practices of knowledge is shared when employees are able to collectively generate, develop, promote and implement innovative work behaviour within a team. Employees' works as a team, only if they feel comfortable to share ideas, make suggestions, speak openly, and express themselves. Therefore, creation of an open communication culture is important, where communication and information flow freely among team members. If enough freedom is not provided to a team, the team members would not work together as they expect the management to provide specific instructions, set deadlines, resolve issues and develop workflows.

Recommendations to improve knowledge based rewards

The management should implement a reward system where every employee receives positive performance evaluations based on their productivity. Based on the evaluation, the employees can be awarded a monetary or non-monetary reward by the organisation. This will help encourage employees to share knowledge in order to gain rewards and recognition. Further, the organisation can monitor

individual and team performance and tie rewards with exceptional work. The management should also look beyond financial incentives by identifying what employees value other than financial rewards. Non-financial rewards may include organising lunches or dinners or social events. The management should also recognise and provide appreciations for both large and small achievements alike. According to Kanter (1988), rewards and recognition encourages and motivates employees to share knowledge within the organisation.

Recommendations to improve innovative work behavior

Khorakian et al. (2019) states that organisational support can lead towards identifying employee knowledge capabilities, trust and management involvement to improve innovative work behaviour. Therefore, promoting a knowledge sharing culture, where trust, teamwork and management support are encouraged will enhance innovative work behaviour. The management should encourage employees to keep an open mind, share ideas and to be willing to take risks. Employees from diverse backgrounds with different ideas and perspectives should be hired, who possess unique abilities and who are passionate about work. The organisational culture should create a workspace, where employees can create and share new ideas. The management can also provide breaks from routine and monotonous work to inspire employees to take part in activities that require creativity and collaboration. Employees must be allowed to participate in brainstorming sessions, where new ideas can be discussed. Every employee's opinion and suggestion must be heard and valued, not only of those holding senior positions. The management can also offer training programs and learning opportunities, as a further reward for employees who come up with new ideas.

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