The Impact of collaborative knowledge environment on attitude toward knowledge sharing

أثر بيئة المعرفة التعاونية على الاتجاه نحو تقاسم المعرفة

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Abstract:

The study investigated the relationship between collaborative knowledge environment and the attitude towards knowledge sharing based on social exchange theory. To achieve the research objectives, this study adopted a descriptive design. A questionnaire was used to collect data from a convenient sample of 115 employees from Sudanese insurance companies who were selected for analysis.

Data analysis showed that only two elements of collaborative knowledge environment have a significant positive effect on knowledge sharing intention, while organizational culture and direct supervisor support have a negative effect on collaborative knowledge intention. These findings are discussed in light of previous literature. In addition, this study acknowledged several limitations and provided insightful suggestions for future research.

Keywords : collaborative knowledge environment, intention, knowledge sharing, attitude.
Jel Classification Codes: D83, D89.

الملخص:

بحثت الدراسة في العلاقة بين بيئة المعرفة التعاونية والتوجه نحو تقاسم المعرفة استنادا إلى نظرية التبادل الاجتماعي. ولتحقيق أهدافها، اعتمدت هذه الدراسة على التصميم الوصفي. واستخدمت استبانة لجمع البيانات من عينة ملائمة من 115 موظفا من شركات التأمين السودانية تم اختيارهم للتحليل.

أظهر تحليل البيانات أن عنصرين فقط من عناصر بيئة المعرفة التعاونية لهما تأثير إيجابي كبير على نية تقاسم المعرفة، في حين أن العناصر الثقافة التنظيمية ودعم المشرف المباشر لها تأثير سلبي على نية المعرفة التعاونية. تمت مناقشة هذه النتائج في ضوء الأدبيات السابقة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أقرت هذه الدراسة بالعديد من القيود وقدمت اقتراحات ثاقبة للبحوث المستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: بيئة المعرفة التعاونية، النية، تبادل المعرفة، الموقف.

تصنيف JEL : D83، D89.

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1. Introduction:

In today's knowledge-based economy, knowledge management plays an important role in organizations. Most managers were effecting on the survival of the organization Lin, (2012). state that knowledge has not any value for organization if not be shared and used. Knowledge that is most powerful tool to create value added, leads to more value when it is shared Liao et al. (2013). The sharing behavior is an individual behavior Bock and Kim, (2006) attitudes of employees may prevent knowledge sharing behavior Zheng, (2017). this regard, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and job involvement are among important attitudes. Ahmed, (2018).

The problem

Knowledge includes skills and intuition of employees and has not been transformed into explicit and documented knowledge (Sharma, 2012). Employees may hesitate to share knowledge due to organizational culture, mistrust, lack of management support, perhaps abuse, and sometimes fear of losing power (Majid et al., 2024). Knowledge management may be valuable for employees, to learn new things (Siwi et al., 2021). The concept of knowledge management is still understood as information management and is associated with technological solutions, such as internal networks and databases (Cheng & Chuang, 2011).

Based on previous studies, it can be said that there are few studies in the field of knowledge sharing for KS G & Minonne, (2010). Therefore, this study seeks to know the effect of the collaborative knowledge environment on knowledge sharing. Some studies reported a positive effect between the collaborative knowledge environment and corporate performance Tiwari (2022). It is clear that not many studies have been conducted in Sudan.

The Questions

Depending on the research problem discussed above, this study attempts to answer the following questions :

What is the influence of collaborative knowledge environment on knowledge sharing attitude?

Sub-questions :

What is the impact of immediate supervisor on the employees' knowledge sharing attitude ?

What is the effect of collaborative knowledge environment CKE dimensions on the knowledge sharing attitude ?

What is the possible effect of the initially proposed control variables on the relationship between the main study variables ?

The Objectives

To investigate the influence of collaborative knowledge environment on knowledge sharing attitude.

To examine the influence of the collaborative knowledge environment CKE dimensions (i.e., organizational culture, immediate supervisor, and attitude of the employee).

Significance of the Study

Utilizing the results in the decision-making process, providing value to strategic managers in the field of knowledge and its management, encouraging leadership in knowledge creation and effective participation.

Theoretical importance :

Shared knowledge helps the organization succeed, sustain and compete. Increasing awareness of how knowledge affects the organization's performance, benefiting from shared knowledge makes leadership feel the importance of knowledge exchange in helping to plan and prepare the appropriate alternative. Employees may become more productive, enhance social value and increase influence in the organization.

Practical importance :

The results may contribute to business development and increased competitive advantage, leadership may help by obtaining how to link the organization with other organizational factors by sharing knowledge. Leadership may enhance the foundations and systems of knowledge management in improving the work environment, and through it, ethical, economic and social values are enhanced within the organization.

2. knowledge' collaborative environment and attitude toward knowledge sharing:

2.1 Collaborative Knowledge Environment:

2.1.1 The Concept :

Organizational climate is a set of shared and agreed upon perceptions among employees in their organization, which are carefully and consciously implemented (Shim, 2010). They emphasized that in the collaborative climate of a business unit, the direct supervisor and colleagues in the work group play the most important roles in knowledge exchange.

2.1.2 Dimensions of the collaborative knowledge environment

2.1.2.1 Culture of organization :

The norms, beliefs, values and practices adhered to by organizational members, in order to sustain and develop the firm's goals and objectives without adversely affecting the welfare of the organization or its members. Within, sub-cultures can develop. (Davenport; (1998), (Farhan 2019).

2.1.2.2 Attitude of employee:

It's included utilitarian motivationand control believe and also hedonic motivation, and contextual force. Liao et al., (2013). Collection of beliefs has about that particular behavior. Karhukorpi, (2022), (Ajzen, 1991).

2.1.2.3 Immediate Supervisor Support:

People's behavior is influenced by supervisors and coworkers in the working team. This is confirmed by Cabrera et al. (2006).

2.2 Knowledge Sharing Attitude:

2.2.1 Definition of Knowledge Sharing Attitude:

Attitude toward knowledge sharing refers to the amount of favor one has for knowledge sharing Fishbein and Ajzen (1980). According to Ajzen (1991), an individual will have a higher tendency to perform a specific behavior if the individual evaluates the behavior positively. Probodha et al. (2019).

2.2.2 The Components of Knowledge Sharing Attitude:

2.2.2.1 Rewards Expected:

Rewards are considered a motivational tool to enhance employee efficiency (Matsuo, 2022). Rewards increase the degree of knowledge dissemination and contribution to organizations and improve them, and knowledge sharing practices increase the level of innovation in product manufacturing (Al-Alawi et al., 2007).

2.2.2.2 Association Expected

Expected associations assume that if employees believe they could improve relationships with other employees by offering their knowledge, they would develop a more positive attitude toward knowledge sharing. (Al-Alawai et al., 2007).

2.2.2.3 Expected Contribution:

Based on the factor affecting knowledge sharing, as a purely self-motivational source. Expected contribution will have a positive effect on the attitude toward knowledge sharing. The degree to which believes can improve an organization's performance through knowledge sharing. G. & MINONNE, c., (2010).

2.2.2.4 Employee Attitude toward knowledge sharing:

The degree of one's positive feelings about sharing one's knowledge believe that attitude has an influence on behavioral intentions. This relationship has received substantial empirical support. The findings show that individual's feelings regarding knowledge sharing reflect their readiness to be involved in the process of knowledge sharing. Therefore, it seems that one of the important aspects of knowledge sharing intention is attitude toward sharing knowledge. Ojha (2005)

3. Framework and Research Hypotheses:

3.1 Social exchange theory (SET):

Social exchange theory was developed in the 1960 by Homans (1961). During social exchange, people tend to maximize their benefits and minimize their costs Molm, (2003). Thus people can be motivated to exchange by benefit maximization. As knowledge sharing is a form of social exchange, several prior studies have used these motivational factors to explain and predict knowledge-sharing intentions.

3.1.1 The (SET) Theory and Collaborative Knowledge Environment (CKE):

The impact of collaborative Knowledge Environment is rarely investigated on knowledge sharing attitude, consciously perceived by the members of organizational. Shim, (2010).

3.1.2 The theory of (SET) and knowledge sharing attitude (KSA):

During social exchange, people tend to maximize their benefits and minimize their costs Molm, (2003). several prior studies have used these motivational factors to explain and predict knowledge-sharing intentions Saunders et al, (2009).

Figure 1: Research Theoretical Framework

Collaborative knowledge environment Organizational culture Immediate Supervisor Employee Attitude	**Knowledge Sharing Attitude** Expected Rewards Expected Associations Expected Contribution Attitude toward knowledge sharing

Source: *prepared by researchers from data analysis (2022)*

3.1.3 Research Hypotheses:

Based on the theoretical framework illustrated above, and based on the previous Studies, this study formulates four main hypotheses along with several sub hypotheses. These research hypotheses are developed and presented as follows:

3.1.4 Collaborative Knowledge Environment CKE has a positive influence on Knowledge Sharing Attitude KSA:

There are many studies which reported a positive relationship between Collaborative Knowledge Environments CKE and Knowledge Sharing Attitude as found, collaborative climate is the strongest predictor of knowledge sharing attitude. Ahmed et al (2018). From the results of some studies, it was found that teamwork does not enhance the knowledge sharing process. (Lin, 2012), but administrative support helps in knowledge sharing, and accordingly the following sub-hypotheses were formulated:

Organizational culture positively affects the knowledge sharing attitude
His direct supervisor positively affects the knowledge sharing attitude
Employee's attitude positively affects the knowledge sharing attitude

3.1.5 The methodology:

This study uses the questionnaire to collect the data based on closed-ended questions, and then the collected data is converted into numerical data which is analyzed to reach findings and draw a conclusion. Paul, K. B. (2017). (Rahman, M. S. (2017).

3.1.6 The population:

The population of the study depend on Sudanese insurance sector including a sample of companies operating in Khartoum state.

3.1.7 Sample of the Study:

Sampling provides a valid alternative to using entire population when; it is impracticable to survey the entire population, when there is a time constraints surveying the entire population and when the results needed quickly after collecting the data. Saunders, (2009). Sample of (115) elements were selected. The size of sample is identified according to the amount of variability in the population, cost and time constraints and the unit of analysis. Furthermore, according to Williams, C. (2007). proposes that a sample size larger than 30 and less than 500 is appropriate for most research.

3.1.8 Data Collection:

Primary data has been collected through the questionnaires. Secondary data has been gathered from the previous research, articles published in journals and relevant scholarly books and electronic sources were used.

3.2 testing of the Questionnaire:

3.2.1 Exploratory factor analysis for collaborative knowledge environment:

The items was used to measure the independent variable were subjected to exploratory factor analysis using maximum likelihood (ML), the summary of results was showed in Table 2 below. All the remaining items has more than recommended value of at least 0.40 in measure of

sample adequacy (MSA) with (KMO) value of 0.916 above the recommended minimum level of 0.60, is significantly (p<.01).

Table 2: Exploratory factor analysis for strategic orientation

Code of items	Components		
	1	2	3
Culture1	.813		
Culture2	.851		
Culture3	.774		
Culture4	.741		
Supervisor1	.765		
Supervisor2	.807		
Supervisor3	.799		
Supervisior4	.710		
Attitude1		.837	
Attitude2		.831	
Attitude3		.885	
Attitude4		.771	
Support1			.555
Support2			.888
Support3			.747
0.916	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		
3044.479	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
63.766	Total Variance Explained		

Source: prepared by researchers from data analysis (2022)

3.2.2 Exploratory factor analysis for knowledge sharing attitude

The items was used to measure the dependent variable were subjected to exploratory factor analysis using maximum likelihood (ML) the summary of results was showed in Table 3 below. All the remaining items has more than recommended value of at least 0.40 in measure of sample adequacy (MSA) with (KMO) value of 0.875 above the recommended minimum level of 0.60, and test of significantly (p<.01). Thus, the items are appropriate for factor analysis.

Table 3: Exploratory factor analysis for operational performance

Code of items	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Rewards1				.886
Rewards2				.922
Rewards3				.847
Rewards4				.546

Associations1		.744		
Associations2		.861		
Associations3		.850		
Associations4		.821		
Contribution1			.760	
Contribution2			.822	
Contribution3			.839	
Contribution4			.826	
Attitude_Toward1	.816			
Attitude_Toward2	.839			
Attitude_Toward3	.860			
Attitude_Toward4	.832			
0.875	**Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy**			
3428.169	**Bartlett's Test of Sphericity**			
68.513	**Total Variance Explained**			

Source: prepared by researchers from data analysis (2022)

3.2.3 Confirmatory factor analysis:

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is the next step after exploratory factor analysis to determine the factor structure of dataset. In the (EFA) we explore the factor structure (how the variables relate and group based on inter-variable correlations); in the (CFA) we confirm the (EFA) factor.

The (CFA) fit for independent variables indices show that the measurements model fits the data well: Chi-square/degree of freedom (cmin/df) = 3.875; incremental fit index (IFI) = .919; comparative fit index (CFI) = .918; goodness of fit index (GFI) = .876; adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = .838; square root mean of residual (RMR) = .045; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .076; and P Close = .000.

3.2.4 Reliability analysis:

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the variables. Nunnally (1978) believes that Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.60 is reliable. Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used measure (Sharma, 2000). Table 4 shows the results of the analysis. All the measures are reliable.

Table 4 : The reliability of the study

Construct	The variables	Items'	Alpha

		Number	
Collaborative Knowledge Environment	Organizational culture	4	**.920**
	immediate supervisor	4	**.882**
	Employee Attitude	4	**.766**
Knowledge Sharing Attitude	Expected Rewards	4	**.842**
	Expected Associations	4	**.868**
	Expected Contribution	4	**.867**
	Attitude toward Knowledge Sharing	4	**.885**

Source: prepared by researchers from data analysis (2022)

3.2.5 Descriptive analysis:

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation was used to describe the variables.

3.2.6 Descriptive analysis of the model:

Table (5) shows the means and standard deviations of the study variables components culture and immediate supervisor, employee Attitude, work group support, knowledge sharing intention, expected rewards, expected associations, expected contribution and attitude toward knowledge sharing. The table reveals that the insurance firms operating in Sudan are emphasized the attitude toward knowledge sharing was in the top ranking score (mean=1.7809, standard deviation=.58696), followed by knowledge sharing intention (mean=1.7846, standard deviation=.59649), followed by expected associations (mean=1.7858, standard deviation=.59172), followed by expected contribution (mean=1.8938, standard deviation=.57810), followed by employee attitude (mean=1.9988, standard deviation=.71723), followed by work group support (mean=2.0938, standard deviation=.69485), followed by organizational culture and immediate supervisor (mean=2.3433, standard deviation=.80917) and expected rewards (mean=2.4823, standard deviation=.90763). Given that the scale used a 5-point scale (1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree), this finding indicates that the attitude toward knowledge sharing tends to inhabit high position in insurances firms operating in Sudan.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of the model

Variables name	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
organizational Culture	2.3433	.80917
immediate supervisor	1.9988	.71723
Employee Attitude	2.0938	.69485
Expected Rewards	2.4823	.90763

Expected Associations	1.7858	.59172
Expected Contribution	1.8938	.57810
Attitude toward Knowledge Sharing	1.7809	.58696

Note: All variables used a 5-point likert scale (1= strongly agree, 5= strongly disagree)
Source*: prepared by researchers from data analysis (2022)*

3.2.7Correlation analysis:

The correlation analysis was used between the study variables with aim of identifying the correlative relationship between the independent, dependent variables, so whenever the correlation is less than (0.30), and it can be medium if the correlation ranges between (0.30-0.70), yet if the value of the correlation is more than (0.70) the relationship is considered strong between variables, and the correlation is considered positive if its value is negative. Table (6) shows the values of link between variables.

Table 6 : Person correlation coefficient for all variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Culture	1						
2. Immediate Supervisor	.540**	1					
3. Employee Attitude	.383**	.585**	1				
4. Expected Rewards	.542**	.396**	.299**	1			
5. Expected Associations	.274**	.462**	.366**	.354**	1		
6. Expected Contribution	.219**	.207**	.224**	.257**	.422**	1	
7. Attitude toward Knowledge	.163**	.224**	.199**	.198**	.372**	.470**	1

Source*: prepared by the researchers from data (2022).*

3.2.8 Modification of conceptual framework and hypotheses:

As a result of factor analysis the initial Framework of this study had been changed, the variables**,** of knowledge sharing intention and knowledge sharing Attitude remained without change. However the variables related to collaborative knowledge environment has been changed to three variables, organizational culture and immediate supervisor, employee attitude, and work group support.

Sequentially, the initial hypotheses presented with the proposed model will be restated. The restated hypotheses are shown in table (6).

3.2.9 Hypotheses testing:

The hypotheses were tested with the path analysis that discloses the effect of independent variables on dependent variables, nonlinearities, correlated independents, measurement error, correlated error terms, multiple latent independents each measured by multiple indicators, and one or more latent dependents also each with multiple indicators (Gaskin,

2016). Given that the variables appeared in confirmatory factor analysis encompasses 12 hypotheses in this study.

3.2.10 The relationship between collaborative knowledge environment and attitude to knowledge sharing:

To test these hypotheses, a similar process of path analysis using AMOS was conducted to predict the impacts of collaborative knowledge environment dimensions on knowledge sharing attitude dimensions.

Table (7) summarizes the results of regression analysis. First, the analysis of the results showed that the three components of collaborative knowledge environment have partial significant relationship with expected rewards, the results indicate positive relationship between organizational culture and immediate supervisor and expected rewards, and not positive relationship between employee attitude on expected rewards.

Second, analysis of the results in table 7 also showed that not positive relationship between organizational culture and immediate supervisor and expected associations, and positive relationship between the employee attitude on expected associations.

Third, further analysis of the results in table 7 showed that a positive relationship between organizational culture, immediate supervisor and expected contributions, not positive relationship between employee attitude and expected contributions.

Fourth, analysis of the results in table 7 also showed that not positive relationship between organizational culture, immediate supervisor and attitude toward knowledge, positive relationship between employee attitude and Attitude toward knowledge.

Table 7: Regression weights for Relationship between CKE and KSA.

Relationships			Esti mate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Expected rewards	<--	organizational culture and immediate supervisor	.514	.062	8.306	***
Expected associations	<--	organizational culture and immediate supervisor	.015	.043	.359	.720
Expected contribution	<--	organizational culture and immediate supervisor	.098	.046	2.150	.032
Attitude toward knowledge	<---	organizational culture and immediate supervisor	.036	.047	.776	.438
Expected rewards	<---	employee attitude	.146	.079	1.841	.066
Expected associations	<---	employee attitude	.302	.055	5.513	***
Expected contribution	<---	employee attitude	.040	.059	.682	.496

Attitude toward knowledge	<---	employee attitude	.114	.060	1.889	.059
Expected rewards	<---	work group support	.073	.075	.983	.326
Expected associations		work group support	.122	.052	2.369	.018
Expected contribution		work group support	.118	.055	2.144	.032
Attitude toward knowledge		work group support	.083	.056	1.478	.139

Source: *prepared by the researcher from data (2022).*

4. Analysis of the results:
Table 8: Summary of the study results

Hypotheses Two: The relationship between collaborative knowledge environment and knowledge sharing attitude.	partially supported
the relationship between organizational culture and expected rewards	Supported
the relationship between immediate supervisor and expected rewards	Supported
the relationship between employee attitude and expected rewards	not supported
the relationship between organizational culture and expected associations	not supported
the relationship between immediate supervisor and expected associations	Not supported
the relationship between employee attitude and expected associations	supported
the relationship between organizational culture and expected contributions	supported
the relationship between immediate supervisor and expected contributions	supported
the relationship between employee attitude and expected contributions	not supported
the relationship between organizational culture and Attitude toward knowledge	not supported
the relationship between immediate supervisor and Attitude toward knowledge	not supported
the relationship between employee attitude and Attitude toward knowledge	supported

Source: prepared by the researcher from data (2022).

The discussion :

The theoretical background of prior literature. It should be noted that in some parts, it is difficult to compare the findings of this study with the previous findings, either because of the lack of previous studies or because of the different components of the construct used in the previous

studies. The following subsections come as a result of pursuing the research objectives and responding to research questions which were stated in the first chapter of this study. Therefore, the discussion addresses the influence of collaborative knowledge environment on knowledge sharing attitude. Drawing on the discussion mentioned above, the major findings of this study can be restated as follows:

 * Sudanese insurance firms adopt a low level of collaborative knowledge environment. Since, CKE components namely, organizational culture and immediate supervisor where adopted at a low level, whilst employee attitude, and work group support was adopted at a high level. A possible explanation includes but not limited to lack of managerial, the organizational procedures, rules and obligations were very strict also the absence of organizational culture which facilitate and promote knowledge sharing activities.

* Sudanese insurance firms pay no attention to attitudes toward knowledge sharing ; this result could be due to the organizational culture and behavior of this firms that cannot motivate people to capture and share knowledge, it seems that more attention must be paid to creating suitable work environments and structures that promote, enable and support effective knowledge transfer.

* Sudanese insurance firms have a low level of knowledge sharing intention.

Low level of knowledge sharing attitude comes as a product of the low level of collaborative knowledge environment and total absence of the engagement in KSA strategies.

5. Conclusion:

This study measures the impact of collaborative knowledge environment and knowledge sharing attitude. The following are some suggestions made by this study:

First, study how knowledge diversity affects knowledge sharing attitude.

Second, I think that larger samples should be provided in future studies.

Third, rely on other different dimensions of collaborative knowledge sharing and knowledge attitude.

Fourth, I think that future research should focus on other concepts of knowledge to determine their impact on knowledge exchange.

Fifth, the scales to measure the study variables involves the possibility of the common method bias for some of the results obtained. In order to pursue further investigation of the conceptual model, it would be

appropriate for future researches to develop more direct and objective measures for knowledge sharing behaviors.

Lastly, due to the number of limited insurance companies that are participating in this study, i.e. as it is only conducted in Khartoum states.

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