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## A Study of the Impact of Human Resource Development Strategies On Knowledge Sharing And Organizational Effectiveness In Management Institutions In Iran.

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Knowledge sharing is not just for transmitting the knowledge but more on the value and the impact of the knowledge itself. Effective knowledge sharing can be achieved through a process of socialization within supportive organizational culture. However people's non-supportive beliefs in sharing knowledge either formal or informal ways can cause knowledge management efforts fail in an organization .  
**Objective:** The objective of the study is to understand the nature of sharing knowledge that will lead into the understanding of its awareness and readiness focusing on its perceptions or views in management institutions. **Results:** The result support that human resource development strategies influences knowledge sharing in step 1. In step 2 upon introduction of mediating variable, human resource development strategies were found significant. Furthermore, knowledge sharing was positively related with organizational and effectiveness. This confirms that knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness.  
**Conclusion:** The findings of this study have explored the importance of the human resource development strategies towards knowledge sharing practices and organizational effectiveness.

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## INTRODUCTION

There is a growing need for individuals who have the appropriate training and experience in the knowledge management function. Knowledge management as a conscious strategy of getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time and helping people share and put information into action in ways that will strive to improve organizational performance. Effective management of organizational knowledge is believed to be linked with competitive advantage and is considered critical to the success of an organization. Knowledge resides within an individual. An organization cannot force individual to share but should encourage or stimulate his intentions to share knowledge. However, not all knowledge needs to be shared. It is important for the organization to understand the willingness of individual employees knowledge sharing behavior.

In an academic institution, knowledge sharing will flourish if this institution is innovative, exercise dynamic changes and really looking for new sources of value. If an academician becomes too competitive and value solely on individual knowledge, he tends to hoard knowledge. He may be reluctant to share course materials and content with anyone else (Norris *et al* 2003). Knowledge sharing is becoming a key phrase especially for those who have useful knowledge and want to share it with those who need it. However, to achieve this is not an easy task. According to Thulstrup (2006) many universities in developing countries are completely unprepared for such demands and even local knowledge users for example industries are frequently hesitant to let students invade their facilities.

### Literature Review:

McCarthy, Garavan and OToole (2003) provide an understanding of the human resource development's roles and strategies in managing boundaries and interfaces in organizations with regard to learning. The authors believe that there should be a strategic human resource development in developing individual as well as organizational development including facilitating their learning and knowledge sharing. The authors highlight an important key point that the idea of a community of practice possesses many values that are emphasized in managing networks boundaries and interfaces. According to Martin *et al* (2005) community of practice is

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important to knowledge sharing because it demonstrates the circulation of knowledge throughout the organization.

Newman (1991) says that intellectual assets are the valuable knowledge available to be used to exploitation must be nurtured preserved and used to the largest extent possible by both individuals and organizations. According to Armbrecht *et al* (2001) a company's culture and structure will be critical factors enabling knowledge flow whereas Qunitas *et al* (1997) suggest that human resources and processes are critical to knowledge management. The existence of a supportive culture in an organization is vital in developing the association between the knowledge capabilities and the business strategy (Pentland 1995). The human resource development is concerned with the provision of learning and development opportunities that support the achievement of strategies and the improvement of an organization teamwork and an individual performance. Within the learning organization a new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, and people continuously learn how to work together. Therefore the learning organization must have human resource development approaches that will develop into self-responsibility and self development, continuous development inter-organization learning and flexible structure that are responsive to environmental changes.

McGregor *et al* (2004) provided a guideline for constructing individual competencies required in the knowledge management environment. The modernization of work demands new conceptions of human capital. This idea is consistent with Louma (2000) who proposes the capability-driven human resource development framework in creating and sustaining the internal capabilities of an organization. The capability is more than the tangible assets. It emphasizes on how people act and what they know, concurrent to the people's capability. The approaches of capability-derived human resource management are closely related to this study because knowledge management adaption nowadays being emphasized in an organization's competitive advantage strategy (Anantatmula, 2004). Venzin (2003) supports that innovation is identified as crucial organizational capabilities for organizational improvements. Furthermore the capabilities are needed for the creation.

#### *Objectives and Hypotheses:*

The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between human resource development strategies, knowledge sharing practices and organizational effectiveness. The factors that influence knowledge sharing intentions that have been analyzed in the present study are; leadership commitment, supportive culture, innovation and creativity, competency and performance, learning and development.

#### *Leadership commitment:*

The leadership commitment towards practicing knowledge sharing can motivate subordinates to share knowledge. Top management need to provide the necessary resources and create a work setting and a supportive climate to allow their juniors to experiment, explore and try out new work practices. Thus, we hypothesize that

H<sub>01</sub> There is no positive relationship commitment wit knowledge sharing practices.

H<sub>1</sub> Leadership commitment has positive relationship with knowledge sharing practices.

#### *Supportive culture:*

Supportive culture refers to the extent to which people in an organization activity support and assist each other in work related matters. This includes moral support from superiors, peer and subordinates in performing teaching and other departmental tasks. Hence we hypothesize that:

H<sub>02</sub> There is no positive relationship of supportive culture with knowledge sharing practice.

H<sub>2</sub> Supportive culture has positive relationship with knowledge sharing practices.

#### *Innovation and Creativity:*

The climate of innovation and creativity reflects knowledge sharing in management institutions in which, the institution exercises – dynamic changes due to industry interface. It is essential for the institution to be an innovative organization where there should be a tolerant of failures and within which information flows freely. Hence we hypothesize that:

H<sub>03</sub> There is no positive relationship of innovation and creativity with knowledge sharing practices.

H<sub>3</sub> Innovation and creativity has positive relationship with knowledge sharing practices.

#### *Competency and Performance:*

Not only individual competencies development is needed, but managerial competencies development is important for an organization to manage and leverage human capital that is consistent to current changes of knowledge based organization (McCarthy *et al* 2003). This includes a wide range of competency enhancement strategies. The ability to share knowledge depends primarily on the individual's talent for effective communication and his social behavior (Probst *et al* 2001). A strategic measurement system is believed to enable to measure the consistency of sharing knowledge e.g. the personal appraisal procedures to evaluate performance on knowledge sharing (Siemieniuch and Sinclair 2004). Thus we hypothesize that:

H<sub>04</sub> There is no correlation between knowledge sharing practices and competency and performance.

H<sub>4</sub> Competency and performance are correlated positively with knowledge sharing practices.

*Learning and development:*

Learning and development is associated with the degree to which formal and informal training and development activities are encouraged in the organization. With the development of organizational workforce, knowledge that is learned and applied will make knowledge sharing practices prevail. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H<sub>05</sub> There is no positive relationship of learning and development with knowledge sharing practices.

H<sub>5</sub> Learning and development has positive relationship with knowledge sharing practices.

*Research Methodology:*

This study seeks to examine the relationship between human resource development strategies(as independent variables) with the extent of knowledge sharing practices(as mediator) and organizational effectiveness(as depends variable). Questionnaires were used to collect from the respondents of the Management Institutions.

Sampling Units: Directors, Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors.

Sampling Procedure: Random sampling method

Sample Size: 150 Respondents

Universe: Management Institutions

*Results and Analysis:*

Table.1 shows the reliability assessments for the independent variables. To assess the internal consistency and stability of data, the reliability analysis shows the degree to which the items in each set correlate with one another. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish this interitem consistency. Since the Cronbach Alpha Coefficients are all above 0.5, it can be concluded that the measures are reliable for further analysis.

**Table 1:** Summary of Reliability Analysis

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha
Leadership Commitment	7	.9270
Supportive Culture	6	.8238
Innovation and Creativity	5	.8875
Competency and Performance	5	.8645
Learning and Development	11	.9466

Regression analysis was carried out to test the relationship between the dimensions of organizational culture and structure to human resource development strategies and knowledge sharing practices (in this research a significance level of 0.05 or 5% significance). Level is used as a basis for accepting the hypothesis. From the regression table (Table 2) the Coefficient of R<sub>2</sub> is 0.516 indicating that the independent variables account for 51.6% of the variance in knowledge sharing. The findings of coefficient matrix show that all the variables have significant impact on knowledge sharing practices.

**Table 2:** Summary of Regression Output

Variables	Beta	Sig.
Leadership Commitment	.452	.004
Supportive Culture	.356	.003
Innovation and Creativity	.321	.021
Competency and Performance	.387	.000
Learning and Development	.178	.020
R <sub>2</sub>	.516	
Value	19.49	

The table of mediating effect of knowledge sharing(Table 3) shows the R<sub>2</sub> change and F change from step 1 to step 2 is statistically significant indicating that human resource development strategies influence knowledge sharing practices. The result support that human resource development strategies influences knowledge sharing in step 1.In step 2 upon introduction of mediating variable, human resource development strategies were found significant. Furthermore, knowledge sharing was positively related with organizational and effectiveness. This confirms that knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness.

**Table 3:** Mediating Effect of Knowledge Sharing

Dependent	Independent	Std Beta Step1	Std Beta Step2
Organizational effectiveness	Leadership commitment	.728**	.456**
	Supportive culture	.654**	.352**
	Innovation and Creativity	.173**	.112**
	Competency and Performance	.665**	.375**
	Learning and Development	.489**	.296**
	Mediator Knowledge Sharing		.435**
	R <sub>2</sub>	.530	.615
	R <sub>2</sub> Change	.530**	.085**
	F Change	58.42**	23.96**

Note: \*\* P<01

(Step 1 refers to regression with the independent variables of one dimension of organizational context, while step 2 refers to regression with the mediating variable)

The entire hypothesis were tested on the relationship between independent variables and organizational effectiveness. Knowledge sharing was mediator to bridge the gap. It was believed that human resource development strategies would have relationship with knowledge sharing. The result showed that leadership commitment, supportive culture, innovation and creativity, competency and performance, learning and development have relationship with it. This finding was supported by previous researchers such as Parker and Price (1994) Kimberly (1976). The findings show that cultural dimension plays an important role in knowledge sharing practices. This is consistent with Davenport *et al*(1998) who posits that shaping culture is central in an organization's ability to manage its knowledge more effectively. Results confirm that knowledge sharing practices are important for organizational effectiveness. This finding is supported by Gold *et al.*(2001) that human resource development strategies is important for knowledge sharing practices that leads to organizational effectiveness.

#### Conclusion:

This research has found that leadership commitment, supportive culture, innovation and creativity, competency and performance, learning and development are critical to success of knowledge sharing practices. Nevertheless, successful knowledge sharing implementation also dependent on the implementation process that is used as it is always not easy especially on new system implementation.

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