

A STUDY OF THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge management is basically about creating the right knowledge or the right knowledge sources (including people) available to the right people at the right time. And therefore perhaps Knowledge sharing is the most significant phase in this process. In order to gain the systematic understanding Knowledge Sharing behavior based on the various theories we have reviewed numerous articles published after 2000. Our focus was on whether the article considered one of the KS theories and that should be an empirical one.

KEYWORDS: Knowledge, Sharing Behavior, Construct, K.S. Theories and K.S. Articles

INTRODUCTION

For the survival of an organization in the era of information technology, there is a need of constructive strength. In this context, knowledge sharing can play a vital role that motivates employees as well organizations for their future benefits or we can say for their future survival. For taking it as on priority, identification of factors that promote or discourage the knowledge sharing behavior in the organization context must be perceptively done. This study is an attempt to understand that influencing factors which have an impact on knowledge sharing behavior with the help of framing a construct of current KS studies. Tentative studies here are conducted to explore more in distinct directions of this concept.

Theoretical Framework of Knowledge Sharing Studies

According to literature reviewed related to knowledge sharing behavior, there were different factors, characteristics and economical situations, which influence the knowledge sharing behavior as well as interpersonal communication between employees, we have tried to investigate these factors and characteristics, by considering the importance of different theories as a significant issue, which affects Knowledge Sharing Behavior for more profound studies, we tried to investigate the factors related to some important theories. We also evaluated whether the articles that considered the theories in different sectors.

Table 1: Recent Knowledge Sharing Theories and Related Studies

S.No	Theory	Study Name	Factors/Variables of Knowledge Sharing
1.	Theory of Perceived Behavior(TPB)/Theory of Reason Action (TRA)	Bock et al. (2005), Bock & Kim (2002) Cabrera et al.(2006), Chen et al. (2009), Cho et al. (2010), Chow & Chan(2008), Gupta &Govindarajan(2000), He & Wei(2009), Kankanhalli et al. (2005), Lin & Lee(2004), Minbaeva&Pedersen(2010), Reychav&Weisberg(2010), Ryu et al.(2003),	Attitude towards KS, Subjective Norms, Normative Belief, organization climate, Anticipated extrinsic rewards, Perceived behavioral control (PBC).

2.	Social Cognitive theory	Bock & Kim (2002), Chiu et al. (2006), Cabrera & Cabrera, (2002). Cho et al. (2010), Hsu et al.(2007), Minbaeva & Pedersen(2010)	Social Network (i.e. social system), Person's cognition (expectations, beliefs), Self-efficacy, outcome expectations.
3.	Social Capital theory	Adler & Kwon's (2002), Chiu et al.(2006), Chow & Chan(2008), Inkpen & Tsang (2005), Kostova & Roth(2003), Wasko & Faraj (2005)	Social Network and shared goals, Perceived social pressure of the organization, Trust, Norms & identification.
4.	Social Exchange theory	Bakker et al.(2006), Burgess (2005), Bock & Kim(2002), Cabrera et al.(2006), Cho et al. ,(2010), Chang et al. (2008) Kankanhalliet al. (2005) King & Marks(2008), Lin (2007), Willem & Buelens (2007), Yu et al.(2010)	Extrinsic beliefs (Reputation & Reciprocity) , Intrinsic benefits (Enjoy helping and self-efficacy) ,cost benefits (Convenience and interaction)

(Construct on the basis previous KS studies)

For the systematic understanding of knowledge sharing behavior it is need to understand the mechanism that drives employees to share their knowledge among other employees of organization. The below mentioned theories in Figure 1 have been applied to understand knowledge sharing behavior and each theory describes different valuable factors with its own strength and weakness. But among all these theories, TRA (Fishbein & Ajzen's, 1975) is well established general theory in social psychological context assumes that intention to share knowledge influenced by attitude towards knowledge sharing behavior and subjective norms of individuals for sharing behavior. Further TRA (Ajzen, 1991) Model was extended to another variable i.e. perceived behavioral control (PBC) that also received a great attention by social cognition theory (Armitage & Conner, 2000; Conner & Norman, 1996a). Accordingly it was assumed that PBC influenced by knowledge sharing behavior and intention to share knowledge. The explanatory power of TPB makes it a useful model for understanding organizational encouragement of Knowledge Sharing Behavior. The TPB is an individual-level theory, and it is important to study this theory since this model has been the base model for all other theories. The theory suggested that behavior-intention relationship is exclusively under the control of belief components (such as attitude, subjective norm etc. it is very important to consider the control of belief components on which sharing behavior of individual depends. Theory also reflects the relationship between intention to share knowledge and KSB, and also between Perceived behavioral controls and KSB. Thus, TRA/ TPB may be adequate to explain mechanism that drives employees to share their knowledge among other employees of organization. Further TPB constructs may help us to go a step further and reflect how the antecedents of individual behavior may be influenced by managerial interventions. For the above reason we need to go deep into the relationships among different variables / factors of Theory of planned behavior (TPB) based on previous studies as shown in below table.

Table 2: Relationships among TPB Constructs

S.No.	Relationships	Studies
1.	Knowledge sharing Intention -> Knowledge sharing Behavior	Bock & Kim (2002), Chen et al., (2009), Chow & Chan(2008), Gupta & Govindarajan(2000), Lin & Lee (2004), Minbaeva & Pedersen (2010), Ryu et al. (2003)
2.	Subjective Norms->Knowledge Sharing Intention	Bock et al. (2005), Chen et al. (2009), Kuo & Young (2008), Lin & Lee (2004), Minbaeva & Pedersen (2010), Ryu et al. (2003),
3.	Attitude-> Knowledge Sharing Intention	Bock & Kim (2002), Bock et al. (2005), Chen et al. (2009), Chow & Chang (2008), Cho et al. (2010), He & Wei (2009), Kuo & Young (2008), Lin (2007), Lin & Lee (2004).
4.	Perceived behavioral control (PBC)-> Knowledge Sharing Intention	Bock et al. (2005), Ryu et al. (2003), Lin (2007)
5.	Perceived behavioral control (PBC)-> Knowledge sharing Behavior	Bock et al. (2005), Ryu et al. (2003), Lin (2007)

(Based On Work of Nisha Kumari on Knowledge Sharing In Indian Organizations)

CONCLUSIONS

Studies of different KS theories revealed the various valuable determinants of knowledge sharing behavior in different organizational context. As we concluded with the framework of Knowledge sharing behavior described by the various KS theories as shown below in figure 1.

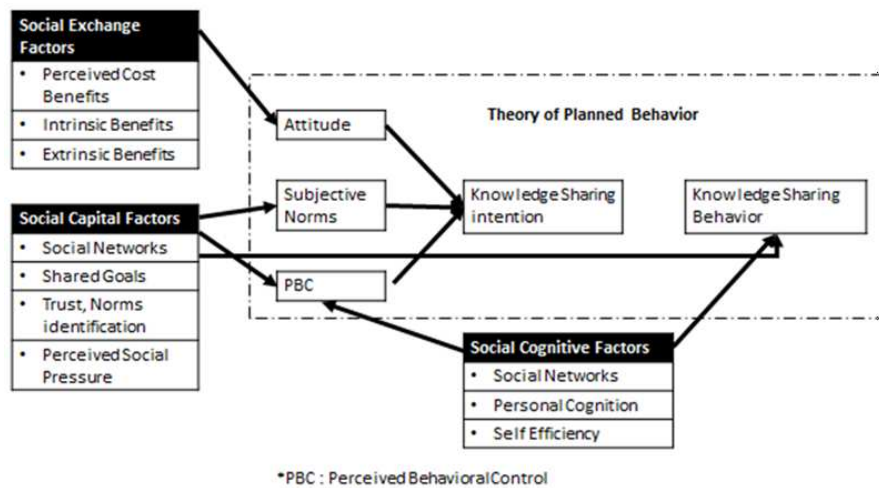


Figure 1: Framework of Knowledge Sharing Behavior by Various KS Theories

KS can be encouraged organizations that may contribute to the sustainability of competitive advantage. At the same time it is highly relevant to examine the more valuable Knowledge Sharing factors and moreover which are fairly underexplored area in the KS literature.

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