

THE PRACTICE OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: THE ANNOTATION OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

BARRIE AHMED^{1*}, NOOR HASRUL NIZAN BIN MOHAMMAD NOOR²

¹Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Gombak, Malaysia

²Department of Information Systems (DIS), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Gombak, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: barrieoza@gmail.com

Received: 28th Feb 2020; Accepted: 26th Oct 2020; Published on-line: 30th April 2021

ABSTRACT: Purpose - The main aim of this paper is to find out whether the library staff is in compliance with the knowledge sharing practices and whether there is a need for knowledge sharing strategies. Hence, the objective is to find out the degree of knowledge sharing practices among library staff in their daily operations.

Design/Methodology/Approach - This study proposes that knowledge sharing practices involve managerial support and individual creativity. It also suggests that senior management needs to support the process of knowledge sharing activities. This conceptual study intends to present its conceptual framework based on previous studies and findings.

Findings - Previous studies have indicated that five factors such as environmental factor, teamwork, trust, work culture, and technology have a positive effect on knowledge sharing practice.

Research limitations/implications - This study is limited to the library staff at IIUM academic library in Gombak campus. It estimates and measures the efficiency and effectiveness as well as explore the effect of knowledge sharing and use of knowledge practices amongst the library staff at IIUM academic library.

Originality/value - This original research aims to enhance the body of literature in knowledge sharing practices in academic libraries by using IIUM Gombak campus library staff as the study setting.

KEY WORDS: *Library Staff, Knowledge Sharing Practice, Knowledge Management, IIUM Gombak Campus Library.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The term knowledge itself, according to McDermott (2000), is a continuous activity that entails guiding the individuals to behave in a particular way of thinking and reasoning. Besides, according to his suggestion, the improvement in successful knowledge sharing requires not just the message but understanding the users (McDermott, 2000). As a result, a suggestion was made for organizations to attend to the effectiveness of knowledge sharing activity; there is a need to conduct an early assessment in the planning process, which is drawn from the representation of the target users in order to find out their needs in terms of what to know and how to deliver the knowledge (Tsui, 2006).

In addition, knowledge sharing is meant to support quality work process as well as making necessary decisions. It can as well be a supporting policy for the interchanging

of ideas between top managers and their workforces or lower staffs such as Liaison Librarians (LL). However, not much is known about the practice of knowledge sharing in Malaysian academic libraries and its efficiency.

The managing of knowledge is considered as the way knowledge workers generate their ideas from their minds and maintain these ideas in order to share with others. Chua (2003) maintained that knowledge sharing is a process by which individuals collectively improve a thought or an idea or a suggestion in the light of their experiences. Along similar lines, Ipe (2003: 340) conferred that the sharing of an individual's knowledge is imperative to the "creation, dissemination, and management of knowledge at all other levels within the organization".

On the other hand, explicit and tacit knowledge are considered equally balanced forms of meaning. Explicit knowledge is recognized to be what is captured in documents, databases, websites, and other knowledge resources while tacit knowledge is not primarily captured but exists in the minds of the people and is reflected as insight, judgments, skills and creativity.

To add to this statement, Van den & De Ridder (2004) evidently stated that tacit and explicit are the two possible measures or techniques used by individual workers for the exchange of knowledge sharing. This means that new knowledge is created by individuals' tacit and explicit knowledge. So, library staff needs to be more open to sharing their ideas with colleagues in order to generate new knowledge for the library they work in. They further stated that the sharing of knowledge can happen between people, within teams, and across organizations. Argote (2012) opined that intellectual resources that exist within individuals or within a team, if not shared, then the knowledge has no use for the organization. This statement is also supported by Srivastava et al. (2006) who maintained that the sharing of knowledge is a serious group of players or team network which involve sharing of ideas or information, making important recommendations to the team's task at present-day.

Knowledge sharing research has been drawn from a variety of concepts. Gaàl et al. (2015: 187) argued that "sharing is a common activity for everyone, but knowledge sharing within an organization is a complex and complicated issue". Their definition of knowledge sharing collaborates with the definition of Ipe (2003). "Knowledge sharing is the process by which knowledge of individuals is converted into a form that can be understood and used by other individuals" (Gaàl et al., 2015: 187). In this regard, the knowledge of personalities is transformed into a comprehensible way and used by others in the organization. In addition, Tsui et al. (2006) also defined it as the process of exchanging information, skills, experience, and understanding among researchers, policymakers, and service providers. In this regard, library staff stands at a vital point in the progress and future of the occupation. Riccio (2010) in his work, discovered that for many years, library staff has been doing knowledge management, and the old-fashioned way has been one way of classifying and unifying information and one of the best ways for sharing information resources, which connect individuals to the information they need. Furthermore, Tsui et al. (2006) added that when individuals are linked together in a particular foundation, they can share their knowledge faster, learn from each other and understand each other, and this leads to the fast and easy flow of information among them. In this regard, therefore, knowledge is power and the value of it increases when it has been shared.

However, Tsui (2006) noted that in knowledge sharing, there is more empirical evidence, which needs to be explored to show the specific factors that influence the

effectiveness of knowledge sharing strategies. He further stressed that research outcomes that are based on knowledge sharing practices on a body of evidence would provide some confidence for investment in knowledge sharing, which serves as valuable assets for today's organizations. This study aims to explore how research in knowledge sharing among academic librarians should be conducted based on previous studies.

In the subsequent segments, the research will highlight the research objective of the paper, comprehensive literature review, development of the proposed model and suggestion on the methodology for further study and conclusion.

1.1 Objectives

The overall objective of the study is to examine gaps from previous research about knowledge sharing and to propose how research about knowledge sharing should be conducted among library staff. Whereas, the specific objectives include examining the knowledge sharing culture of the library staff in their daily work, identifying and analyzing the tools used by the library staff during knowledge sharing process, examining the motivating factors in sharing knowledge, and finding out the inhibiting factors that affect knowledge sharing practices among the staff.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on knowledge sharing have been the topic of research for many years yet the focus is mainly on managerial knowledge sharing. However, the growth of information technology and the Internet has extended knowledge sharing studies to the information environment. The paper, thus, includes a discussion of various themes and sub-themes, which provides a detailed argument on different facets of the subject of knowledge sharing in academic libraries, with consistent assumptions behind this research paper.

Knowledge is one of the most important assets for surviving in the modern industrial environment. A knowledge resource according to Archer and Wang (2002) is mechanism storage and it may be used as a course of knowing and acting and it can be tacit or explicit. They argued that tacit knowledge can be understood and can be applied as well as a communication challenge, which comes from direct experience and action. They further maintained that it is usually shared through interactive discussions and shared skills. Archer and Wang maintained that tacit knowledge can be transformed into explicit knowledge and it can be made available to others without direct interaction with the knowledge resource itself, for example, through skilful methods (Archer and Wang, 2002). In this regard, tacit knowledge is more strategic than explicit resources because it is difficult to transfer and reproduce.

Menkhoff et al. (2004: 5) contended that "knowledge by its very nature exists in both tacit and explicit forms". Grant (1996) also perceived that knowledge possibly will range from general to the specific, and it is well-known to often be available, and is free of a particular experience. He also mentioned that general knowledge is commonly shared, and in that logic, organizations can easily and meaningfully classify and exchange it among the different communities that practice it. Grant also mentioned that explicit knowledge is a codifying knowledge that requires setting to be given along with the core knowledge (Grant, 1996). The statement above needs clear, defining, applicable

categories and relationships that are meaningful across knowledge communities, including necessities for cultural or natural language differences.

2.1 Knowledge Sharing

Ipe (2003: 341) argued that the sharing of knowledge, as the action of building knowledge, is obtainable by others within a frame of unification. Similar to the description above, Davenport and Klahr (1998) also argued that sharing knowledge means providing others with individual knowledge and gaining knowledge from others as well. In addition, Lin (2007) defined knowledge sharing as a culture of social interaction, denoting the exchange of peoples' knowledge, experience, and skills throughout an organization. Knowledge sharing according to Van den Hooff et al. (2004), includes two expressions: (i) intended communication of an individual's knowledge to another, and (ii) knowledge collecting. An example of knowledge sharing includes people who are willing to share knowledge in order to communicate effectively with colleagues and those who effectively consult friends in order to learn new knowledge from them.

Swift and Virick (2013) observed that knowledge sharing involves the delivery of task-related information, or feedback regarding a procedure and can involve communication about a particular task, direct or indirect exchange of tangible items. However, some studies exemplified the importance of knowledge sharing to be the flow of thoughts or ideas moving from an individual who owns it to another individual who needs it. Cabrera & Cabrera (2002) also confirmed this statement in their work. They contended that knowledge sharing is the influence of a group of people to the combined knowledge of the organization (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2002). In another study, Cabrera et al. (2006) observed two elements of knowledge sharing which include the seeking of information/ideas from co-workers and the knowledge which gives out thoughts and understanding to colleagues.

Wang and Noe (2010) argued that the sharing of knowledge is an important means through which staff can contribute to knowledge application. It is a competitive advantage of any organization. Furthermore, they also specified that with the knowledge base resources, sharing knowledge among staff and within teams makes the organization successful. On the other hand, various organizations according to Wang & Noe (2010), have recognized the significant effect of knowledge is the key foundation for practical advantage. Essentially, to know something is to be able to take part in the process that makes the knowledge meaningful. Lee and Al-Hawamdeh (2002) argued that knowledge sharing is a thoughtful performance to which knowledge is reusable through transferable experience to others.

Specifically, knowledge sharing is recognized as a connection between two parties. The person who owns it and the one who obtains it. Some studies mentioned that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation can also play an effective role in the sharing of knowledge. However, extrinsic motivation according to Kohn (1999), indicates a short-term approach and it may not generate any lifelong guarantee of knowledge sharing. Nonetheless, some scholars considered extrinsic motivation not correct if the knowledge shared is only tacit knowledge in its practicality.

Essentially, knowledge is not like a commodity which can be delivered around freely since it is secured as a subject by the individual. Thus, to learn something new from someone else is to make good use of that individual's ideas and then know how to re-establish it in the future. Nowadays, the reason for sharing knowledge or not sharing

has been the subject of the importance of recognizing individual determination. However, for some reasons, workers may decide to share their ideas with others or not to do so. For example, quite a few studies written by different scholars showed that workers are determined to share their ideas/information as part of their responsibilities and for the sake of guiding others to do the right thing. They believe that knowledge sharing is part of job performance and it is a matter of exchanging ideas.

The sharing of knowledge is essential according to Hendricks (1999) because it provides a connection or a link between people and the organization by moving knowledge from a person to the organizational level. Furthermore, Tiwana (2002) considered knowledge sharing is essentially important, especially in terms of empowerment by supporting a mission, vision, and value. Besides, the organization is obligatory to have a clean environment, recognized policies, a collective team liability, and strong consciousness for decision making.

In the framework of knowledge sharing, Yeo (2007) described it as a means to an end. As such, he labelled it as the process by which workers and groups communicate their knowledge for shared benefits. Recalling back the origins of knowledge sharing, Cummings (2003) stated that it has developed into a broad and deep field of study on technology transfer and innovation. He further argued that recently, knowledge sharing has developed in the field of strategic management. Progressively, according to Cummings (2003), knowledge sharing research has now progressed into a level of professional knowledge perception.

Some scholars argued that the sharing of knowledge happens between two people - the owner of the knowledge and the seeker of the knowledge. In this regard, Hansen (2005) also argued that the sharing of knowledge is best assumed as the behaviour by which a person freely provides other actors, both inside and outside the organization, with access to that person's brilliant knowledge and experience. Emphasizing the importance of social presence in knowledge sharing, Hansen (2005) further argued that if the understanding of knowledge is based on action and unspoken components, then knowledge sharing behaviour is more likely to involve the influence of one's time and skills to the traditional face-to-face communication or other forms of discussion.

Furthermore, Burch (2007) contended that knowledge sharing practices are enhanced when there is clarity with regard to what knowledge is exchanged based on the objectives, who is involved in the process of exchange, and which skill is the most appropriate to use. A study conducted by Daniel et al. (2003) labelled the development of knowledge sharing. They emphasized that developing knowledge sharing is more about creating an environment in such a way that individuals can recognize their knowledge, eager to expand their working abilities and, above all, are able to do a thing in common.

Essentially, researchers have tried to explain the various terms in knowledge management such as information sharing, knowledge transfer, and knowledge exchange. The evidence of such research work can be traced to Wang and Noe (2010). They assumed knowledge sharing occurs in experimental and practical studies whereby the members are given a piece of particular information. Similarly, knowledge transfer is a kind of knowledge sharing consisting of information resources ownership, and knowledge used by the receiver. The exchange of knowledge means the sharing of ideas with others as well as searching for knowledge from others. Based on these dimensions, the present study examines the following components of knowledge practices among library staff in general and library staff of IIUM Campus library in

particular. The following sub-section describes knowledge sharing's effectiveness and efficiency.

2.2 The Effectiveness and Efficiency of Knowledge Sharing

To provide a positive and accurate definition of both effective and efficient knowledge sharing, the researcher relates to Bosua and Scheepers' (2007) definition. They defined knowledge to share efficiency as the amount of time, effort, and expenses needed to share knowledge. Whereas knowledge sharing effectiveness refers to the usefulness of knowledge that is shared (Bosua and Scheepers, 2007). The previous explanation shows that effectiveness and efficiency are directly influenced by knowledge sharing that is employed by knowledge workers. However, there are some factors that have effects on knowledge sharing. Those factors are categorized by some researchers in dissimilar approaches. According to Cheng et al. (2009), knowledge sharing factors can be divided into three sub-groups, namely: (i) technical factors, (ii) individual factors, and (iii) organizational factors. The technical factors are connected to information technology like software and hardware, originate from the knowledge management systems, and are used in sharing activities. Thus, individual factors are extracted from individuals' personality characters such as beliefs, attitudes, and feelings, and they are called internal factors. However, organizational factors refer to the environment of the organization and the relationship between staff and colleagues. These factors are structured as external factors.

On the other hand, knowledge-sharing barriers have been identified in three groups namely: individual, organizational, and technological barrier (Riege, 2005). Similarly, Wahlroos (2010) also categorized knowledge sharing barriers into three different aspects. He maintained that there are many factors that have increased awareness in the knowledge organization. These factors include the growing speed of change, staffing attrition, growth in organizational scope, new structures including network organizations, growing knowledge intensity of goods and services, a revolution in information technology, etc. To understand fully the concept of knowledge sharing, Wahlroos (2010) argued that one needs to venture into the field of knowledge management research. The simple reason is that knowledge sharing has a relationship to the discipline of knowledge management. Despite several definitions of knowledge management, there is a consistent awareness in literature, which indicates that knowledge management structure builds on past experiences and creates new mechanisms for exchanging and creating knowledge.

2.3 Gaps in Literature

This paper intends to contribute towards the inclusive arena of knowledge management in academic libraries, specifically the area of knowledge sharing practices in such libraries, which according to Liu et al. (2010: 456), has not been researched to any extensive degree. The same opinion was made by Sarrafzadeh et al. (2010: 198). Little research has been done over the years, especially in Malaysia, about knowledge sharing practices in academic libraries, precisely the use of knowledge management tools to ensure that knowledge that exists within individuals is shared among the staff of the library.

Thus, the aim of the study is to increase awareness of the importance and benefits of using knowledge management tools, and more precisely, the value of knowledge

sharing in an academic library, and consequently the need to incorporate a knowledge management strategy in the IIUM Gombak campus library. The importance of doing this study is to see whether essential motivation in knowledge sharing practices has any significant impact on IIUM library staff. Although there have been a lot of research done on the mechanism of knowledge sharing practices in an academic library, this study voices for itself and cannot, therefore, be accountable for similar studies. The study provides a good point of reference and is exclusive in the field of the academic library since it shows how knowledge sharing affects the workflow of knowledge transfer.

3. PROPOSED MODEL

Management scholars have identified a number of variables in contemporary research by using the technology transfer especially, the nature of knowledge. Those variables according to Cummings (2003) have been shared in terms of their tacit and explicit knowledge. However, as Blomqvist and Levry (2006) argued, knowledge creation or knowledge-making is common in natural surroundings, besides, social exchange is also part of it. For example, the creation of knowledge must be the exchange of ideas amongst personalities or professional workers in their daily activities. In regard to these clarifications, this research paper aims to discuss five different factors that influence knowledge sharing among library staff. These factors are environment factor, trust, teamwork, culture, and technology among employees. Figure 1.1 below illustrates the different independent variables and the dependent variable that affect knowledge sharing practices in the library.

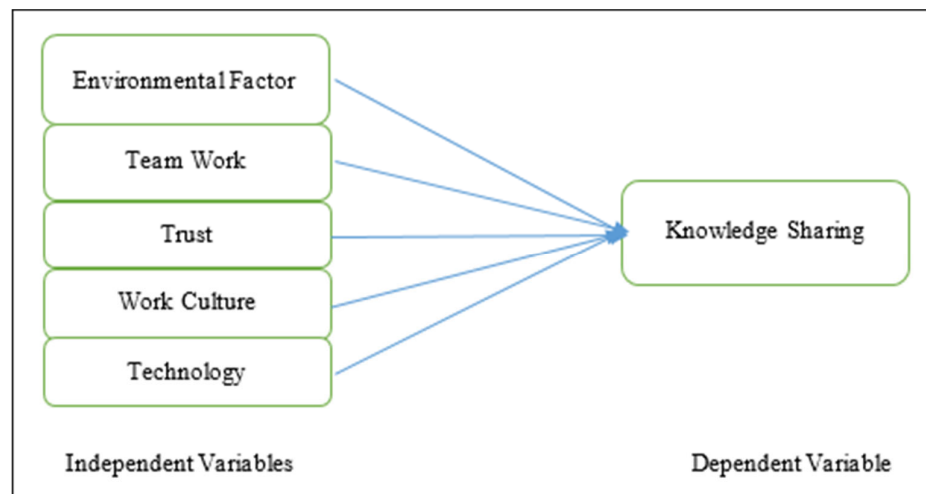


Fig. 1. Research conceptual framework of the study

3.1. Environmental Factor

Practical research on knowledge management has identified quite a few important factors that influence knowledge sharing practices including environmental factors. They are social interaction, power supply, physical facilities, lighting level, and motivation (Amusa et al., 2013). Furthermore, some studies confirmed that the working environment in some cases can inhibit or increase the efficiency of staff whose jobs require comfortable, conducive, and affable environment. In this regard, creating an open environment or strong culture for the organization success may help workers or teams to achieve their main goal or objectives. In addition, Desouza and Evaristo (2003) argued that to manage an open environment involves a lot of obligations which will

increase the value of employees. These obligations, for example, access to good training and education will enable employees in the future to widely contribute their knowledge to help colleagues when needed. Besides, this will certainly help organizations to succeed.

Actually, motivation plays a vital factor in the organization. In some cases, it might be a factor that can affect all other factors. In addition, willingness to progress without the anxiety of integrating new practice in an environment by its nature is frequently conventional in its approach (Skretas, 2005). In support of the subject of an open environment, Desouza (2003) further added that organizational problems regarding knowledge sharing can be resolved by the organization itself. Therefore, according to Desouza, the main issue that arises through effective knowledge supervision is just by applying advanced information technologies solution, but managers should be encouraging workers to share knowledge effectively (Desouza, 2003).

Hence, based on all previous observations, library staff should consider the learning goal orientation as a good opportunity for successful knowledge sharing if they want to share their knowledge wisely and practically. To set up an appropriate strategy, it is also important for the organization to carry out a complete analysis of the existing situation which identifies the gap between what is available and what is required. Subsequently, for the organization, the identification of problems and the need for knowledge creation and knowledge sharing practices will be realised. There is no doubt that this research paper is simply identifying missing gaps in its investigation.

3.2 Teamwork

Most probably, there are many ways to find various purposes motivating people or employees to be part of a group or a team such as income, status, benefits, or stages to other opportunities in a particular society. Therefore, in an organization, there should be a steady squad or strong team members that can organize a suitable flow of opinion through knowledge sharing in the association. Martin (2006) described the team as a small group of people with balancing skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and an approach for which they hold themselves equally accountable. Furthermore, Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) also defined a team as an intellectual group of people whose members share a common goal and work collaboratively. In this regard, teamwork or members of a particular group share can either succeed or fail together as well as share the benefits and costs of success or failure. It could be inferred that knowledge sharing can easily succeed within functioning teams where the management supports the full flow of communication among employees.

On the discussion about teamwork in knowledge sharing practices, both Wang & Neo (2010) suggested that teamwork personalities and procedures have an effect on knowledge sharers. They demonstrated that the lengthier the team formed, the stronger the unity of the team. Thus, in this regard, team members are more likely to share their knowledge effectively. Additionally, Martin (2006) argued that library staff using teams ought to consider the skills needed for team-based rules and incorporate questions regarding teamwork and soft skills such as communication and listening skills, willingness to work with others, the ability and desire to take responsibility for decisions, creativity, and flexibility as part of commitment procedure. Martin further discussed some of the challenges, which libraries are facing nowadays, affecting knowledge sharing. He mentioned that the change in budget, staffing shortages, and rapid

development of technology have forced a number of libraries to rethink the way they offer services to their patrons (Martin, 2006). To respond to these challenges, Martin observed that a lot of major academic research libraries have modernized their professional producers to include groups or teams that execute the work.

3.3 Trust

The term 'trust' has been documented as a determining factor of effectiveness on knowledge sharing practice and is well-known as what individuals believe that an actor can do as well as how he/she behaves concerning relations involving risks (Aliakbar et al., 2013). It is also an influential factor (Blomvist, 1997). Trust throughout the organization, according to Yiu and Law's (2012) findings, is an important factor for library staff and beyond because it enables employees to share and obtain knowledge and service resources as well. Other management scholars also observe the term to be very important because the sharing of knowledge consists of providing information and ideas to workers or shared groups such as team or a community of practice with opportunities for collaboration (Wang and Neo, 2010). Therefore, trust plays a partnership role to determine friendship and relationship in the organization. Dirnks and Ferrin (2001) were positive that relationships that are built on trust are a significant factor for employees or members of a team because it motivates employees to willingly share their know-how with open minds.

From the above mentioned, certainly, creating a relationship with individuals at work, for example, library staff is very important, especially, when employees trust each other they can do things together and share knowledge freely. Knowledge sharing can occur and flow freely among library staff when trust is highly regarded between colleagues. Ghoshal and Bartlett (1994) contended that trust is one of the four dimensions that have an impact on an individual's actions in the workplace. This could be inferred that with trust, employees can learn a lot from colleagues and share their knowledge with others as well. Allee (1997) preserved that knowledge sharing can only become a reality if people generate a clear climate of trust within the organization.

Similarly, the presence of trust can also create honesty and efficiency among staff for good communication channels, which leads to the interactive effect of knowledge management implementation without restrictions to knowledge sharing practices amongst employees (Yang, 2004). On the other hand, Wang and Neo (2010) examined three important dimensions of trust; firstly, capability: this is when a person decides to or have a tendency to share less knowledge with familiar colleagues who are highly skilful. Secondly, integrity: this is where a person tends to share knowledge when he/she is certain that others are honest, rational and know how to follow principles. Lastly, benevolence: this dimension is not that much important to the knowledge sharing but it is when an executor is thought to have the goodwill of trust.

3.4 Work Culture

Knowledge building is based on three dimensions, and the first dimension is culture, which must be considered before the practice of knowledge management. Besides, knowledge sharing processes have been observed by many scholars. Hislop (2013) cited Chau (2003) from a study where various dimensions of case study found evidence of the importance of human, social and cultural factors in knowledge sharing management processes. Nonetheless, work culture is influenced by the culture of individual employee. Thus, according to Chau (2003), culture has effects on three

elements. They are people, process, and technology. Moreover, the people element comes with cultural differences while process and technology are influenced by new system acceptance.

Research works have shown that knowledge management has a strong human component. For this reason, knowledge management strategy might not possibly be effective unless if the organization establish a trusting knowledge culture that emphasizes the role and value of knowledge on a regular basis (Allee, 1997). In support of this argument, Allee (1997) also perceived that the working culture of any organization must be geared towards rewarding innovation, learning, testing, marking inquiry and reflecting. In this regard, the organization must establish a clean environment for the working culture for knowledge creation, knowledge transfer, and knowledge use.

Furthermore, in order to improve an organization's working culture, Gurteen (2010) suggested that improvement must start with the individual because each individual has the potential to influence using his or her own knowledge. The application of self-knowledge is where the confidence of knowledge sharing culture begins. In the modern era, many institutions especially academic institutions are typically involved in advanced performance and they are making comprehensive effort to change the organizational norms, values, attitudes, beliefs, and paradigms related to knowledge. According to Gurteen, there are some thoughtful strategies to help organizations' workforces recognize the significance of those assets. Besides, genuine knowledge needs a perfect fitting between organizational culture and the management initiatives because any modification that is not fit within the framework of the working culture might not help the organization to achieve its goals (Gurteen, 2010).

In this regard, the researcher believes that in order for any organizational culture to fully succeed in knowledge sharing, the labour force needs to have a clear and effective direction towards knowledge creation. In doing so, employees must be motivated, bright, intellectually interested and willing to explore new ideas, and moreover, individuals should not feel isolated or fill offended of the institute they service.

3.5 Technology

In the contemporary era, technology is extremely regarded to be the gadget or a tool that requires interconnecting individuals inside and outside the organization. In the process of knowledge sharing, technology is needed for processing, storing and retrieval of information within the knowledge workers. However, even though technology might not be the best solution for the success of knowledge sharing, it allows employees to share their knowledge easily and anytime (Anna, Nove, and Puspitasari, 2013). In addition to the previous discussion, there has been increasing evidence of research; technology plays an important transformational measure and is a part of changing the corporate culture of knowledge sharing. Gurteen (2010) argued that knowledge management is basically about people, not technology, but despite this claim, he believed that in our modern era, there is no way individuals can share their knowledge effectively inside or outside the organization without using technology. Besides, he further maintained that in many ways, technology has made knowledge sharing a reality because in the past it appeared impossible or difficult for people to share knowledge or work collaboratively with co-workers around the world.

Looking at the development of technologies today, it has become a reality. As a result, there are many empirical studies that have been done on Information Technology

(IT) development and its key role in knowledge sharing. However, IT has facilitated the codification of tacit knowledge and mostly supports knowledge management in a wide range of information sharing in the best and easiest way (Asogwa, 2012). Tools like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Weblogs, and Wikis can facilitate knowledge sharing effectively in the organization, and it has interconnected the world into a global network. Progressively, libraries have also realized the potential of these tools for knowledge sharing and are now widely used by library staff and its users.

Therefore, technology use and knowledge sharing are logically connected since IT can perfectly empower quick exploration, access to, and retrieval of information. IT can support communication and link collaboration between staff in the organization (Lin, 2007). Additionally, Cummings (2003) perceived that a number of variables that have an effect on knowledge sharing especially the nature of knowledge, both tacit and explicit, have been identified by many scholars.

3.6 Proposed Methodology

As suggested by Yin (2013: 92), the proposed method determined for this kind of study “enables a researcher to develop a converging line of inquiry”. As a result, the findings or conclusions of that study are significant and flawless because those findings are built on many different sources of information following a validated method (Yin, 2013). However, to accomplish an empirical investigation of this paper, future researchers are requested to collect a survey around 350 questionnaires from the respondent. This method, according to Cochran et al. (2007), explains that respondents are approached in order to gain a representative sample of the entire target population one aims to study.

For future researchers, who wish to employ the proposed model of this study and go on with the empirical testing, it is suggested that they follow some important stages to test the model. First, data should be collected from the staff of the academic library, but special care should be taken as the study focuses only on the staff of the academic library. Second, to prepare the collected data for further analysis, the researcher should check it from any missing responses, outliers, and normality.

Therefore, in order to check the consistency of the scale, reliability analysis should be conducted, followed by exploratory factor analysis to assess the number of dimensions underlying the data. This stage helps the researcher to compare the proposed dimensions and the explored dimensions. Thirdly, the explored dimensions should be confirmed via confirmatory factor analyses. This stage helps the researcher to assess the validity of the instruments (Guion et al., 2011). Lastly, the causal linkages may be tested to see the effect of the proposed variables on knowledge sharing among library staff.

Furthermore, it is suggested that data should be collected either directly or indirectly from the library staff in one or two distinct academic libraries in Malaysia. According to Zikmund et al. (2010), this technique refers to a method of collecting data from respondents whereby the respondents have the responsibility to read and answer the items. The researchers should be able to collect data from respondents in different individuals simultaneously. The analysis will use the scale measurement in order to ensure the functionality of the concepts and distinguish the effects of variables on the subject matter studied. The statistical testing will also be employed to describe the relationships between the factors. Furthermore, for future researchers who wish to use multiple sources of evidence in a case study should broadly discourse matters

regarding attitudes and behaviours, for example, examining knowledge sharing practices among library staff.

4. CONCLUSION

Knowledge sharing between individuals is acknowledged to be the key to innovation and competitive advantage to organizations. Thus, knowledge sharing practices involve managerial support and individual creativity. This paper presented a review of the literature on the value of knowledge sharing practices and the formation in an academic library. It examined the available literature on knowledge sharing practices amongst library staff. The study made specific reference to some case studies on knowledge sharing in several academic libraries, particularly in terms of how the libraries responded to knowledge management practices, namely knowledge sharing, and knowledge transfer. It is interesting to note what challenges academic libraries are faced with, especially when knowledge management practices are present.

The discussions taking place throughout the literature showed that there are great benefits for the library and information science (LIS) profession. This is, especially, the case with regard to the academic library, although many challenges exist in terms of knowledge sharing practices due to the lack of understanding regarding how, whom and what is involved in the sharing of knowledge within an organization. Information sharing, knowledge transfer, knowledge exchange and the ICT structures were discussed in this paper, and how they fit in with knowledge sharing was also explored. The study clearly showed that knowledge-sharing practices are a concept that still needs to be explored, especially with regard to academic libraries in Malaysia.

REFERENCES

- Aliakbar, E., Yusoff, R. B. M., & Moghaddam, F. M. (2013). A review of factors influencing knowledge sharing behaviour among virtual communities. *International Journal of Business and Marketing*, 1(1), 17.
- Allee, V. (1997). 12 principles of knowledge management. *Training and Development*, 51(11), 71-74.
- Amusa, O. I., Iyoro, A. O., & Olabisi, A. F. (2013). Work environments and job performance of librarians in public universities in South-west Nigeria. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, 5(11), 457-461.
- Anna, V., Nove, E., & Puspitasari, D. (2013). Knowledge sharing in libraries: a case study of knowledge sharing strategies in Indonesian university libraries.
- Archer, N., & Wang, S. (2002). Knowledge management in the network organization. In *Information Technology Interfaces, 2002. ITI 2002. Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on* (pp. 299-304). IEEE.
- Argote, L. (2012). *Organizational Learning: Creating, retaining and transferring knowledge*. Springer Science and Business Media.
- Asogwa, B. E. (2012). Knowledge management in academic libraries: Librarians in the 21st century. *Journal of knowledge management practice*, 13(2).
- Blomqvist, K. (1997). The many faces of trust. *Scandinavian journal of management*, 13(3), 271-286.

- Bosua, R., and Scheepers, R. (2007). Towards a model to explain knowledge sharing in complex organizational environments. *Knowledge management research and practice*, 5(2), 93-109.
- Burch, S. (2007). Knowledge sharing for rural development: challenges, experiences, and methods.
- Cabrera, A., and Cabrera, E. F. (2002). Knowledge-sharing dilemmas. *Organization Studies*, 23(5), 687-710.
- Chau, S. (2003). The use of e-commerce amongst thirty-four Australian SMEs: an experiment or a strategic business tool? *Journal of Systems and Information Technology*, 7(1/2), 49-66.
- Cheng, M. Y., Ho, J. S. Y., and Lau, P. M. (2009). Knowledge sharing in academic institutions: a study of Multimedia University Malaysia. *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, 7(3), 313-324.
- Cochran, W. G. (2007). *Sampling techniques*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Cummings, J. (2003). Knowledge sharing: A review of the literature.
- Daniel, B. K., Zapata-Rivera, J. D., and McCalla, G. (2003, January). A Bayesian computational model of social capital in virtual communities: In *Communities and Technologies* (pp. 287-305). Springer Netherlands.
- Davenport, T. H., and Klahr, P. (1998). Managing customer support knowledge. *California management review*, 40(3), 195.
- Desouza, K. C. (2003). Barriers to effective use of knowledge management systems in software engineering. *Communications of the ACM*, 46(1), 99-101.
- Desouza, K., and Evaristo, R. (2003). Global knowledge management strategies. *European Management Journal*, 21(1), 62-67.
- Dirks, K. T., & Ferrin, D. L. (2001). The role of trust in organizational settings. *Organization Science*, 12(4), 450-467.
- Gaál, Z., Szabó, L., Obermayer-Kovács, N., and Csepregi, A. (2015). Exploring the Role of Social Media in Knowledge Sharing. *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, 13(3).
- Ghoshal, S., & Bartlett, C. A. (1994). Linking organizational context and managerial action: The dimensions of quality of management. *Strategic Management Journal*, 15(S2), 91-112.
- Grant, R. M. (1996). Toward a knowledge-based theory of the firm. *Strategic management journal*, 17(S2), 109-122.
- Guion, L. A., Diehl, D. C., & McDonald, D. (2011). *Triangulation: Establishing the validity of qualitative studies*. University of Florida IFAS Extension.
- Hansen, S., and Avital, M. (2005). Share and share alike: The social and technological influences on knowledge sharing behaviour. Case Western Reserve University, USA. *Sprouts: Working Papers on Information System*, 5(13). Available at: <http://sprouts.aisnet.org/5-13>. Accessed: August 6, 2014.
- Hendriks, P. (1999). Why share knowledge? The influence of ICT on the motivation for knowledge sharing. *Knowledge and process management*, 6(2), 91-100.

- Hislop, D. (2013). Knowledge management in organizations: A critical introduction. Oxford University Press.
- Huczynski, A. (2004). Influencing within organizations. Routledge.
- Ipe, M. (2003). Knowledge sharing in organizations: A conceptual framework. *Human Resource Development Review*, 2(4), 337-359.
- Kohn, A. (1999). Punished by rewards: The trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise, and other bribes. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Lee, C. K., and Al-Hawamdeh, S. (2002). Factors impacting knowledge sharing. *Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*, 1(01), 49-56.
- Lin, H. F. (2007). Knowledge sharing and firm innovation capability: an empirical study. *International Journal of Manpower*, 28(3/4), 315-332.
- Liu, K. L., Chang, C. C., and Hu, I. L. (2010). Exploring the effects of task characteristics on knowledge sharing in libraries. *Library Review*, 59(6), 455-468.
- Martin, E. R. (2006). Team effectiveness in academic medical libraries: a multiple case study. *Library Publications and Presentations*, 21.
- McDermott, R. (2000). Why information technology inspired but cannot deliver knowledge management. *Knowledge and Communities*, 41(4), 21-35.
- Menkhoff, T., Loh, B., and Evers, H. D. (2004). What makes knowledge sharing in organizations tick? An empirical study. School of Business, Singapore Management University. Available at: <http://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/lkcsb>.
- Osterloh, M., and Frey, B. S. (2000). Motivation, knowledge transfer, and organizational forms. *Organization Science*, 11(5), 538-550.
- Riccio, H. M. (2010). Librarians and Knowledge Management: Everything Old is New Again. *AALL Spectrum*, 15, 24.
- Riege, A. (2005). Three-dozen knowledge-sharing barriers managers must consider. *Journal of knowledge management*, 9(3), 18-35.
- Sarrafzadeh, M., Martin, B., and Hazeri, A. (2010). Knowledge management and its potential applicability for libraries. *Library Management*, 31(3), 198-212.
- Skretas, G. (2005). Factors affecting the full use of library and information management systems by library personnel. *The program*, 39(2), 139-146.
- Srivastava, A., Bartol, K. M., and Locke, E. A. (2006). Empowering leadership in management teams: Effects on knowledge sharing, efficacy, and performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(6), 1239-1251.
- Swift, M. L., and Virick, M. (2013). Perceived support, knowledge tacitness, and provider knowledge sharing. *Group and Organization Management*, 38(6), 717-742. Available at: <http://gom.sagepub.com/>.
- Tiwana, A. (2000). The knowledge management toolkit: practical techniques for building a knowledge management system. Prentice-Hall PTR.
- Tsui, L., Chapman, S. A., Schnirer, L., and Stewart, S. (2006). *A Handbook on Knowledge Sharing: Strategies and Recommendations for Researchers, Policy Makers, and Service Providers*. Edmonton: Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families.

- Van den Hooff, B., & de Leeuw van Weenen, F. (2004). Committed to sharing: commitment and CMC use as antecedents of knowledge sharing. *Knowledge and process management*, 11(1), 13-24.
- Van den Hooff, B., and De Ridder, J. A. (2004). Knowledge sharing in context: the influence of organizational commitment, communication climate and CMC use on knowledge sharing. *Journal of knowledge management*, 8(6), 117-130.
- Wahlroos, J. K. (2010). Social media as a form of organizational knowledge sharing. A case study on employee participation at Wärtsilä. Department of Social Research, Faculty of Social Sciences, 100.
- Wang, S., & Noe, R. A. (2010). Knowledge sharing: A review and directions for future research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 20(2), 115-131.
- Yang, J. T. (2004). Qualitative knowledge capturing and organizational learning: two case studies in Taiwan hotels. *Tourism Management*, 25(4), 421-428.
- Yeo, R. K. (2007). Problem-based learning: a viable approach to leadership development? *Journal of Management Development*, 26(9), 874-894.
- Yin, R. K. (2013). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Sage Publications.
- Yiu, Maria, and Law, Rob. (2012). Factors Influencing Knowledge Sharing Behavior: A Social-Psychological View in Tourism, *Service Science*, 3(2), December 2012, 11-31.
- Zhao, W., & Othman, M. N. (2010). Predicting and Explaining Complaint Intention and The behaviour of Malaysian Consumers. An Application of the Planned Behavior Theory. *Advances in International Marketing*, 9(21), 229–252.
- Zikmund, W. G., Babin, B. J., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business research methods*. Cengage Learning.