

Knowledge Sharing and Turnover Intention in Business Management Institutes: *Do Individual Differences Play a Pivotal Role?*

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge Sharing (KS) and Turnover Intention (TI) are undoubtedly the most researched topics but it is important to look at the concepts in context to the faculties in the Management institutes, seeing the unconventional nature of the discipline. Armoured by the imperative role of management institutes in creating and distributing knowledge, this study examines the relationship of age, gender, qualification and experience with the KS behaviour of the faculties in management teaching institutes in the eastern and northern states of India. It also tries to answer whether knowledge sharing affects the faculty TI. This is an exploratory study with a total sample size of 339, collected through convenience sampling method, using standard scale questionnaires. The analyses were done with SPSS 20 through correlation and linear regression analysis. The findings indicated that KS lowered the faculty's TI and with growing age, better qualification and higher experience, the KS behaviour of the faculties increased. At the same time, gender of the faculty members had no effect on the KS behaviour. All the findings were discussed in reference to the existing literature.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Demographic differences, Turnover Intention, Management Teaching Institutes, Eastern and Northern states of India.

INTRODUCTION

Employees are the most valuable resource of any organization; in fact, it is the knowledge embedded within them, is the most significant resource for an organisation's sustainable competitive advantage (Liao et al., 2004). In an educational set-up where

knowledge acquisition and sharing are pivotal, it becomes important to study the factors that play an important role in its dissemination and proper utilization. Within the domain of higher education set-up, Xiong and Deng (2008) believe that effective knowledge

sharing (KS) increases the organisational knowledge accumulation and further enhances the capacity of the individuals in their respective jobs.

“We believe most people have a natural desire to learn, to share what they know, and to make things better” (O’Dell, Grayson & Essaides, 1998).

The above statement is true to the core about human nature. And if someone is in teaching sector it should become the philosophy of working life. Faculties are expected and obligated to acquire knowledge and up-to-date it throughout their working career due to their specific work demand. However, due to the intimate nature of the knowledge acquisition, it is but obvious that the individuals generally develop a sense of psychological ownership of their acquired knowledge and sometimes they feel that sharing the respective knowledge with others’ is similar to transferring the ownership of the knowledge to someone else. Henceforth, most of the time faculties refrain from sharing knowledge eagerly. And thus the most important challenge for almost all the organization is to create systematic practices managing knowledge in the organisation (Drucker, 2001).

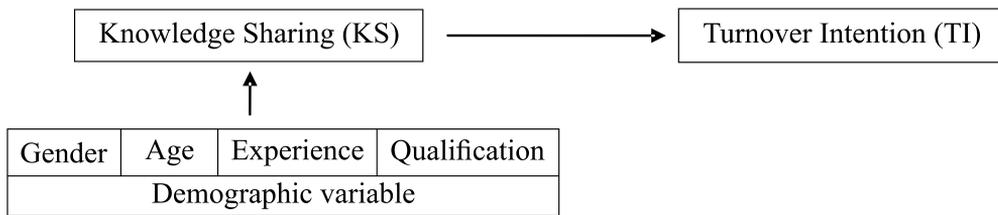
Many researchers (Bundred, 2006; Qureshi and Evans, 2015; Paulin and Suneson, 2012) have worked and found that the organisational and the individual factors inhibit Knowledge Sharing (KS) practices. They found that there can be cases when individuals’ unconsciously try to withhold the knowledge from their colleagues.

Sometimes technical problems can be a cause of information exchange delays and incomplete knowledge sharing might occur due to the recipients’ inability to absorb the total knowledge shared. Ardichvili et al., (2003) said that if individuals are scared of criticism or unintentionally misleading someone then also KS is deterred.

It is very important that the practice of KS in organisations must be directed by organisational policies. The past studies show that the occurrence of the past behaviour inspires and enables the development of an interrelated typical behaviour (Orbell and Verplanken, 2010; Verplanken and Aarts, 1999; Verplanken and Orbell, 2003). Therefore, an employee engaged in KS by means of the system develops a strong knowledge sharing behaviour.

Here, it is important to note that the individual differences too play a significant role, in defining the knowledge sharing behaviour. Sharing knowledge, either explicit or tacit, requires effort from the individual who is engaged in the process of sharing (Bartol and Srivastava, 2002). Based on the above assumptions the author have tried to test the relationship between demographic differences like age, gender, qualification and years of experience on the KS behaviour of the faculties teaching in Management Institutes (which are undoubtedly highly knowledge intensive) and further the relationship of KS behaviour with the Turnover Intention (TI). For the purpose of this study, the following conceptual model has been developed (Refer fig.1)

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Author's own representation

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge Sharing (KS)

According to Nonaka (1991), knowledge is a multi-dimensional concept. It is a mix of data, information, skills, experience and opinion which an individual carries or encounters. Nielsen and Cappelen (2014) have distinguished knowledge as tacit and explicit. Tacit knowledge is an individual's personal knowledge which is developed by studying, experiences and social exchanges and it is very difficult to transmit as it is embedded in the individual. While explicit knowledge is that knowledge which can be stored, externalised and captured. Nonaka (1991) said that new knowledge is created when individuals' interact with each other and their tacit knowledge gets transferred to the explicit knowledge and this knowledge could become organisational knowledge as well. He further stated that both kinds of knowledge are complementary to each other.

Educational Institutes are undoubtedly knowledge-intensive and faculties are the most critical resource. Lin (2006) proposes knowledge sharing as linking the carrier and the requester of

knowledge in the organization. While Ardichili et al. (2003) said that knowledge sharing is the source and mandate of the new knowledge in an organisation. Therefore, the importance of KS in organisations cannot be negated.

Demographic differences in Knowledge Sharing (KS)

Ojha (2005) in his study found that if in a team there were less people or were minority in terms of gender, marital status, level of education then they less engaged in KS. Lin (2006) found that the individual characteristics like- age, educational qualification and years of experience probably slow down the relationship between knowledge promoter and the process. Personality is also widely studied in connection with knowledge sharing behaviour (Barrick and Mount, 1991).

The research community report that among the influencing factors of KS, the study pertaining to the personal characteristics (demographic variables) is relatively less (Pangil and Nasrudin, 2008). Therefore, it agrees that demographic characteristics are a very important research direction (Zheng, 2017). The relevant demographic indicators like the age, gender,

educational background, professional background, organizational tenure, ethnicity, and socio-economic background are worth studying and added to this different organisation types have different characteristics so the study should focus on different organisation types (Zheng, 2017). In this backdrop, this study aims at studying the effect of demographic variables Age, Gender, Experience and qualification on KS and proposes the following hypothesis for the study:

H1: With age faculties KS behaviour increases.

H2: Gender impacts KS behaviour of management faculties.

H3: Better qualified faculties engage in higher KS

H4: More years of experience lead to increased KS

Turnover Intentions (TI)

An employee's Turnover Intention (TI) is basically voluntary, conscious and intentional wilfulness to leave the present employer (Tett and Meyer, 1993). Zimmerman and Darnold (2009) found that TI is the reliable predictor (i.e., objective measure) of the voluntary turnover (the willful departure of the employee). The tangible cost associated with the departure may include the hiring and training costs but the intangible cost may be much higher due to the loss of intellectual and human capital, and it can be even detrimental if the employee is a part and parcel of the knowledge-intensive organisation like the management institutes.

Many researchers have tried to find out the probable reasons for the TI of the employees in the organisations (Flowers and Hughes, 1973; March and Simon, 1958). Cotton and Tuttle (1986) did a meta-analysis and identified 26 important variables i.e., individual, work-related, and contextual factors (e.g., pay, education, age, length of service, and job satisfaction) having a direct or indirect effect on an individual's TI. Issues like faculty members' behaviour, motivation and productivity (Blackburn and Lawrence, 1995), gender (Zhou and Volkwein, 2004) and job satisfaction (Rosser, 2004) have been well researched in regard to developing the TI.

Relationship between Knowledge Sharing (KS) and Turnover Intention (TI)

Jacobs and Roodt (2007) in their research quoted that there is no observed indication of the association between KS and TI. The reason cited was that KS as a practical concept is not well established (Hislop, 2003). Thus they worked on the development and validation of a questionnaire on Knowledge sharing (which is used in this study) and further found that there was a significant negative relationship between KS and TI.

It was also found that employees' TI is inversely related to organisational commitment. Jacobs and Roodt (2007) in their study found that organisational commitment has a positive impact on KS, thus it is clear that an employee's TI will have an inverse relationship with KS. DeLong (2004) in his study found that

those employees, who were better skilled/qualified for their jobs, were more inclined towards external information about opportunities for alternate job availability, showing higher TI. Malos & Campion (1995) propose an important fact that the type of knowledge that is shared between employees' may influence their TI. If knowledge is specific to the organisation (i.e., firm practices and relationships) then the chances are strong that the employee will not show increased TI because the knowledge cannot be used anywhere else. Holtom et al., (2008) in his study found that Knowledge transfer is expected to partially mediate the TI, as extensive literature on turnover studies shows that retention is influenced by a lot many other factors. Based on these findings we may hypothesize that;

H₅: KS will lower the TI of the management faculties.

THE STUDY CONTEXT

Business Management teaching institutes in India have changed radically due to the changing workforce demographics, strong industrial collaboration and growing demand of the professional degree. This sector is now seen with high propagation of educational institutes and a generic demand for skill up-gradation, creativity in the academic process and heightened research and publication pressure for the faculties. Due to this amplified occupational demand and heightened pressure faculties have to compete with each other and as the knowledge can be a big differentiating factor, they

sometime may tend, not to share it readily.

Alvesson (1995) in his study assumed that the education sector is a pure-knowledge-intensive industry, highly differentiated by the tacit and explicit knowledge it holds. KS is one of the dominant characteristics of this sector and many studies have shown KS as an important antecedent to the TI. If the organisations are able to foster effective knowledge sharing practices, then it may be assumed that the faculties will happily stay with the organisation. Individual differences at the same time are found to impact various psychological variables and knowledge sharing probably is one such variable.

Under the above tenacities, this study is carried out in the business management teaching institutes in India. The data was collected from Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. These five states are identified as having a sizable number of business management teaching institutes in the northern and eastern part of India in recent years. During the data collection the heterogeneity of the chosen institutes in terms of status, infrastructure, recognition and accreditation, student enrolment number and industry-academia collaboration was thoroughly deliberated.

METHOD

Sample

The data collection was carried out at the end of 2017. The faculties from the business management institutes/

schools from Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were chosen as the target population. A total of 550 questionnaires were floated online. Faculties were informed that their participation was voluntary and all the information will be kept confidential.

After constant reminders and request through phone calls and e-mails., 375 responses were collected at a response rate of 68%. After data purifying, 339 responses were used for the final study. Refer table 1 which shows the key demographic variables of the research.

Table 1: The key demographic variables of the research

Demographic Variables	Measures	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	136	40.1 %
	Male	203	59.9 %
Age	20–30	16	4.7 %
	31-40	183	53.9 %
	41-50	98	29.0 %
	51-60	38	11.2 %
	More than 60	4	1.2 %
Experience	0-5 years	92	27.1 %
	6-10 years	136	40.1 %
	11-15 years	76	22.4 %
	16-20 years	33	9.7 %
	More than 20 years	02	0.6 %
Qualification	Post- Graduate	117	34.5 %
	Post- Graduate with NET/SET qualification	106	31.3 %
	Ph D without NET/SET	99	29.2 %
Qualification	Ph D with NET/SET	17	5.0 %
Working hours	Less than 25 hours Per week	10	2.9 %
	26- 35 hours	70	20.6 %
	36- 45 hours	144	42.5 %
	46- 55 hours	111	32.7 %
	More than 56 hours	4	1.2 %
Marital Status	Single	38	11.2 %
	Married	292	86.1 %
	Separated/ Divorced	5	1.5 %
	Widowed	4	1.2 %

Source: Author's own survey data

Data Collection

Electronic mode of data collection was used, as this method provided the ease of data collection and significantly reduced the response recording time. It provided the respondents with the ease of answering the questionnaire in their free time. Though it required additional effort from the researcher's side to follow up and speed up the process by repeatedly e-mailing and calling them.

MEASURES

Scale for demographic variables:

A demographic variable generally describes the nature and distribution of the sample used with inferential statistics. Psychologist Stanley Smith Stevens (1946) developed and wrote about the scales of measurement-Nominal, Ordinal, Interval and Ratio. In this study, the demographic variables like gender are scrambled on a Nominal scale. Age is measured on an interval scale; qualification and experience are also coded on a Likert Scale - '1' signifying the lowest category and '5' as the highest. This scale is useful for measuring these independent variables in this study because it allows the researcher to calculate the mean, in addition to the median, mode and standard deviation in the data.

Knowledge sharing (KS) scale:

KS scale developed by Jacobs and Roodt (2007) is adopted for the purpose of this study. It is a 23 items scale. Each item has a five-point intensity response, anchored at extreme poles ranging from "to no extent" or "disagree" (low intensity) to "a large extent" or "agree"

(high intensity). The five dimensions of KS are renamed for the ease of use and make it more contexts specific (Refer Annexure 1). This scale was used because it had better construct validity and has been culturally validated as well. The Cronbach alpha value for the scale was found 0.84, which is well acceptable.

Turnover intention (TI) scale:

For measuring the TI the questionnaire made by Roodt (2004) was adopted. The questionnaire had 14 items that were measured on a seven-point intensity response scale fixed at extremes (e.g. "never" marked as 1 - Low Intensity, to "always" marked as 7 - High Intensity). A Cronbach alpha value of 0.91 of TI scale was obtained indicating acceptable reliability of the items. The reason for using this questionnaire was that most of the earlier instruments in the literature measured TI on a relatively small number of items (Guimaraes, 1997; Lambert et al., 2001), raising questions on the construct validity.

RESULTS

The descriptive result of the data showed that KS (Mean = 107.05; Std. Deviation = 12.19) negatively correlated ($r = -.12$; $p < .05$) with the TI (Mean = 46.14; Std. Deviation = 9.71), which proved that KS environment deterred the TI of the faculties in the business management institutes. The demographic variable, Age (Mean = 41.25; Std. Deviation = 7.61) was found to be inversely correlated with TI ($r = -.22$; $p < .01$) and directly correlated with the KS ($r = .22$; $p < .01$). It implied that with increasing age the faculties tend to stay back with the organization and engage more in KS practices. Gender

(Mean = 1.40; Std. Deviation = 0.49) was found having no significant effect on TI and KS. Years of experience (Mean = 2.17; Std. Deviation = 0.96) negatively correlated with TI ($r = -.17$; $p < .01$), but was positively correlated with the KS ($r = .21$; $p < .01$). Therefore, it was found that the more was the experience the less was

the TI and higher was the indulgence in the KS behaviour. It was found that Qualification (Mean = 2.05; Std. Deviation = 0.92) was negatively correlated with TI ($r = -.22$; $p < .01$) and positively correlated with ($r = .22$; $p < .01$). Table -2 shows the descriptive statistics and correlation among the variables.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation among studied Variables

Category	Gender	Age	Exp	Qualification	TI total	KS F1	KS F2	KS F4	KS F3	KS F5	KS Total
Gender	1	-.168**	-.104	-.003	.061	.068	-.160**	.014	.037	.056	-.006
Age		1	.706**	.517**	-.227**	.000	.151**	.197**	.246**	.136*	.220**
Exp			1	.495**	-.170**	.131*	-.070	.248**	.254**	.134*	.218**
Qualification				1	-.227**	-.022	.007	.255**	.327**	.318**	.226**
TI total					1	.063	-.080	-.096	-.243**	-.159**	-.122*
KSF1						1	-.197**	.156**	-.094	-.096	.464**
KSF2							1	.082	.321**	.223**	.462**
KSF4								1	.554**	.662**	.754**
KSF3									1	.656**	.650**
KSF5										1	.643**
KS Total											1
Mean	1.40	41.25	2.17	2.05	46.14	21.87	26.59	28.20	14.78	15.61	107.0
Std. Deviation	0.49	7.61	0.96	0.92	9.71	6.44	5.10	4.63	2.72	2.47	12.19

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's own survey data

Although the correlation coefficients showed the relationship between the variables, the linear regression of KS as Independent Variable is run with TI as Dependent Variable to test the goodness

of fit (R^2) of the model. The table – 3 below shows that the R^2 value is .012, which implies that although the model is a good fit model but the total variance explained by IV in DV is not much it is just 0.02 %.

Table 3: Model summaries of KS and TI

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.122 ^a	.015	.012	9.65559
a. Predictors: (Constant), KS_Total				

Source: Author's own survey data

Table- 4 indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variable significantly well. The significance value, $p < .024$ is less than .05

signifying that the KS practices is negatively affecting the TI of the faculties in the business management institutes.

Table 4: ANOVA of KS and TI

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	478.565	1	478.565	5.133	.024 ^b
	Residual	31418.639	337	93.230		
	Total	31897.204	338			
a. Dependent Variable: TI_total						
b. Predictors: (Constant), KS_Total						

Source: Author's own survey data

Similarly the table-5 showed that there exist a negative value of the coefficient ($B = -.098$) suggesting that

as the KS increased, the TI of the faculties tended to decrease.

Table 5: Coefficients of KS and TI

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	56.592	4.642		12.191	.000
	KS_Total	-.098	.043	-.122	-2.266	.024
a. Dependent Variable: TI_total						

Source: Author's own survey data

CONCLUSION / DISCUSSION

The above findings suggest that KS practices in the business Management institutes' helps in lowering the TI of the faculties, accepting our H5 and strengthening the work of Malos & Campion, (1995). It may be reasoned that as management teaching faculties work in a highly knowledge-intensive environment and under the pressure to research and publish, they tend to collaborate for their work and share the knowledge. So, if an organization has

proper KS practices, then it may be able to lower the TI of the faculties.

Our proposed H1 is also accepted, as the correlation table showed a positive relationship of KS with growing age. The reason may be that with age, the faculties mature professionally and feel more secure due to increased educational qualification, recognition and job security and thus freely and readily engage in KS. This work is against the findings of Lin (2006), who found that with age the relationship of

knowledge transmitter and the acceptor slows down, so indirectly showing that age slows down the KS process. It was also found that higher qualification and experience too led to increased KS, paving the way to accept our H₃ and H₄ and validating the findings of Ojha, (2005). It may be reasoned that as the faculties become more educated and experienced they gain more acceptance as a bearer and sharer of knowledge. In the meantime they may be entrusted with more personal and organizational responsibility and accountability to share the knowledge with their counterparts.

The findings rejected our H₂, implying that gender had no relationship with KS. It needs to be further investigated and leaves a room for future research direction.

MANAGERIAL / PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study showed that in business management teaching institutes KS can reduce the faculty's TI to a significant level. Turnover and TI are a big problem nowadays due to the increased job availability or due to the less charm of teaching as a profession among the Engineering and Management graduates, due to various reasons, cited in the extant literature. Jacques Barzun beautifully quoted as under seeing the present condition of the teaching as a profession;

“Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition.” - Jacques Barzun

Therefore, based on the findings of this study we propose that to retain the faculty's in the organization or may be in the sector (more precisely), the administrators should promote a healthy and constructive knowledge sharing environment within the academic realm, addressing the individual differences of Age, Qualification and Experience.

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**Annexure 1:
Cronbach alpha and Factor Loadings of Knowledge Sharing Scale**

Sl. No.	Items	F-1	F-2	F-3	F- 4	F-5
FEAR & KNOWLEDGE SHARING						
KS18	share knowledge due to -You are afraid your career would be in danger if you make mistakes (-)	0.713				
KS19	share knowledge due to -Not enough trust exists in this organisation (-)	0.832				
KS20	share knowledge due to -Others don't want to do likewise (-)	0.859				
KS21	They are afraid their careers would be in danger if they make mistakes (-)	0.699				
KS22	Not enough trust exists in this organisation (-)	0.869				
KS23	Colleagues don't want to do likewise (-)	0.828				
OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH						
KS1	To get recognition		0.854			
KS2	To be rewarded		0.857			
KS3	To satisfy your self- fulfillment needs		0.815			
KS4	To support management strategic objectives		0.651			
KS5	To enhance your career		0.812			
KNOWLEDGE SHARING						
KS6	opportunity to attend training courses			0.716		
KS7	opportunity to share your knowledge with colleagues			0.726		
KS8	opportunity to attend informal gatherings where knowledge is shared			0.816		
KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND CULTURE						
KS12	share knowledge due to the trust that exists in the organisation				0.468	
KS13	share knowledge due to the likelihood that colleagues will do likewise				0.546	
KS14	share knowledge due to -It is highly valued by management				0.663	
KS15	share knowledge due to -The organisational culture facilitates a learning environment				0.590	
KS16	share knowledge due to People who share knowledge are regarded as experts				0.668	
KS17	share knowledge due to it contributes to positive performance appraisals				0.553	

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS & KNOWLEDGE SHARING						
KS9	Contributes to the success of this organisation					0.702
KS10	Contributes to the competitiveness of this organisation					0.851
KS11	Contributes to the innovativeness of this organisation					0.698
Eigen Values		6.76	5.12	2.99	1.21	1.02
Cumulative Percentage (%)		18.07	33.02	44.54	55.83	66.92
KMO		0.87				
Bartlett Test of Sphericity		5737.85*** (df= 253)				
Cronbach Alpha		0.92	0.91	0.84	0.88	0.9
Total scale reliability		0.84				

Source: Author's own survey data

