

Positioning Organisational Culture in Knowledge Management Research

Authors : Said Al Saifi

Abstract : This paper proposes a conceptual model for understanding the impact of organisational culture on knowledge management processes and their link with organisational performance. It is suggested that organisational culture should be assessed as a multi-level construct comprising artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions. A holistic view of organisational culture and knowledge management processes, and their link with organisational performance, is presented. A comprehensive review of previous literature was undertaken in the development of the conceptual model. Taken together, the literature and the proposed model reveal possible relationships between organisational culture, knowledge management processes, and organisational performance. Potential implications of organisational culture levels for the creation, sharing, and application of knowledge are elaborated. In addition, the paper offers possible new insight into the impact of organisational culture on various knowledge management processes and their link with organisational performance. A number of possible relationships between organisational culture factors, knowledge management processes, and their link with organisational performance were employed to examine such relationships. The research model highlights the multi-level components of organisational culture. These are: the artifacts, the espoused beliefs and values, and the underlying assumptions. Through a conceptualisation of the relationships between organisational culture, knowledge management processes, and organisational performance, the study provides practical guidance for practitioners during the implementation of knowledge management processes. The focus of previous research on knowledge management has been on understanding organisational culture from the limited perspective of promoting knowledge creation and sharing. This paper proposes a more comprehensive approach to understanding organisational culture in that it draws on artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions, and reveals their impact on the creation, sharing, and application of knowledge which can affect overall organisational performance.

Keywords : knowledge application, knowledge creation, knowledge management, knowledge sharing, organisational culture, organisational performance

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