

Capitalizing 'Ba' in a Knowledge Creation among Medical Researchers in Malaysian Higher Education Institution

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Abstract : For the past few decades, there are growing numbers of knowledge based industries in Malaysia. As competitive edge has become so important nowadays, the consideration of research and development (R&D) should be put at the highest priority. Alike other industries, HEIs are also contributors to the nation's development and wealth. Hence, to become a hub for creating a knowledge-based society, HEIs not only responsible for producing skillful human capital, but also to get involved in R&D. With the importance of R&D in today's modern economy and the rise of Science and Technology, it gives opportunities for researchers to explore this sector as to place Malaysia as a provider in some key strategic industries, including medical and health sciences field. Academic researchers/medical researchers possess unique tacit and skills based in accordance with their experience and professional expert areas. In completing a collaborative research work, there must be platforms to enable the conversion of their knowledge hence beneficial towards creation of new knowledge. The objectives of this study are to: i) explore the knowledge creation activities of medical researchers in the Malaysian Higher Education Institution (HEI); ii) explore the driving forces for knowledge creation activities among the researchers; and iii) explore the interpretation of medical researchers on the establishment of 'ba' in the creation of knowledge. Based on the SECI model was introduced by Nonaka and Takeuchi and the Japanese concept of 'ba', a qualitative study whereby semi structured interview was used as to gather the informants' viewpoints and insights based on their experience capitalizing 'ba' to support their knowledge creation activities. A single the study was conducted at one of the HEIs located in Sabah. From this study, both face to face and the ICT-assisted tools are found to be significant to support interaction of their knowledge. ICT seems to ease their interaction with other research collaborator. However, this study revealed that interaction conducted in physical settings is still be best preferred by the medical researchers especially situations of whereby their knowledge is hard to be externalized. Moreover, it revealed that motivational factors play important roles as for driving forces affecting their knowledge creation activities. Other than that, the medical researchers addressed that the mix interaction bring forth value in terms of facilitating knowledge creation. Therefore this study would benefit the institution to highly optimize the utilization of good platform so that knowledge can be transferred and be made used by others in appropriate ways.

Keywords : 'ba', knowledge creation dynamics, Malaysia, higher education institution, medical researchers

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