

Towards a Measuring Tool to Encourage Knowledge Sharing in Emerging Knowledge Organizations: The Who, the What and the How

Authors : Rachel Barker

Abstract : The exponential velocity in the truly knowledge-intensive world today has increasingly bombarded organizations with unfathomable challenges. Hence organizations are introduced to strange lexicons of descriptors belonging to a new paradigm of who, what and how knowledge at individual and organizational levels should be managed. Although organizational knowledge has been recognized as a valuable intangible resource that holds the key to competitive advantage, little progress has been made in understanding how knowledge sharing at individual level could benefit knowledge use at collective level to ensure added value. The research problem is that a lack of research exists to measure knowledge sharing through a multi-layered structure of ideas with at its foundation, philosophical assumptions to support presuppositions and commitment which requires actual findings from measured variables to confirm observed and expected events. The purpose of this paper is to address this problem by presenting a theoretical approach to measure knowledge sharing in emerging knowledge organizations. The research question is that despite the competitive necessity of becoming a knowledge-based organization, leaders have found it difficult to transform their organizations due to a lack of knowledge on who, what and how it should be done. The main premise of this research is based on the challenge for knowledge leaders to develop an organizational culture conducive to the sharing of knowledge and where learning becomes the norm. The theoretical constructs were derived and based on the three components of the knowledge management theory, namely technical, communication and human components where it is suggested that this knowledge infrastructure could ensure effective management. While it is realised that it might be a little problematic to implement and measure all relevant concepts, this paper presents effect of eight critical success factors (CSFs) namely: organizational strategy, organizational culture, systems and infrastructure, intellectual capital, knowledge integration, organizational learning, motivation/performance measures and innovation. These CSFs have been identified based on a comprehensive literature review of existing research and tested in a new framework adapted from four perspectives of the balanced score card (BSC). Based on these CSFs and their items, an instrument was designed and tested among managers and employees of a purposefully selected engineering company in South Africa who relies on knowledge sharing to ensure their competitive advantage. Rigorous pretesting through personal interviews with executives and a number of academics took place to validate the instrument and to improve the quality of items and correct wording of issues. Through analysis of surveys collected, this research empirically models and uncovers key aspects of these dimensions based on the CSFs. Reliability of the instrument was calculated by Cronbach's α for the two sections of the instrument on organizational and individual levels. The construct validity was confirmed by using factor analysis. The impact of the results was tested using structural equation modelling and proved to be a basis for implementing and understanding the competitive predisposition of the organization as it enters the process of knowledge management. In addition, they realised the importance to consolidate their knowledge assets to create value that is sustainable over time.

Keywords : innovation, intellectual capital, knowledge sharing, performance measures

Conference Title : ICAHS 2017 : International Conference on Arts, Humanities and Sustainability

Conference Location : Copenhagen, Denmark

Conference Dates : August 17-18, 2017