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Interdependence of Social Media Networking and Knowledge Sharing of Employees in IT Sector, Chennai

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Abstract - Knowledge has always been viewed as one of the key strategic resources that can deliver sustained long-term competitive advantage. Various researches have been conducted to measure the pattern and social networking usage behaviour in workplace. According to the study an average internet user spends about 6 hours average per month at his work. Sharing is a very common activity for everyone, but knowledge sharing within an organization is a mind boggling and complicated issue. Knowledge sharing is a process by which the knowledge of an individual is converted into a form that can be understood and used by other individuals. Knowledge sharing alludes to the task to help other people with knowledge, and to collaborate with others to solve problems, develop new ideas, or implement processes. This paper is about Interdependence among Social Media Networking and Knowledge sharing of employees in IT Sector, Chennai. Main objective of the study is to find out the interdependence among Age, Gender, Experience and Knowledge sharing. The study is based on primary data. Result of the study reveals that IT industry is a resource oriented industry and it becomes quite important to ensure that the knowledge in the minds of resources is safeguarded.

Key words: Creativity, IT industry, Knowledge sharing, Social Media Networking, Social Capital, workplace.

I. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge has always been viewed as one of the key strategic resources that can deliver sustained long-term competitive advantage. Organizations that need to flourish, compete, and operate in a consistently advancing condition can't leave the development of knowledge within the organization to chance. The exchange of information and knowledge among employees is an essential part of knowledge management. As a matter of fact, the organizations are faced with the challenge of how to inspire individuals to share their knowledge.

For quite a few years, the world's best-known forecasters of social change have anticipated the development of new economy where intellectual power and knowledge, not conventional sources of energy and machine power is the critical resources. However, this future is now here and the knowledge economy has arrived. This evolving era is portrayed by rapid change and uncertainty, the increasing significance of knowledge and knowledge management and the notoriety of new information technologies that can possibly profoundly change the way organization do business.

SOCIAL NETWORKING IN WORKPLACE

Various researches have been conducted to measure the pattern and social networking usage behaviour in the workplace. According to the study an average internet user spends about 6 hours average per month at his work. Another report claims that some employees spend nearly two hours per day on Facebook in the workplace. It has also been argued that despite negative issues, the use of social networking will also benefit the organizations. Social media networking was also used within the organization members as a communication tool, a source to share information and knowledge, as a medium to relieve their stress and to learn new skills. Social media networking allows individuals to meet and make new relationships with users from all around the world. The use of enterprise social networks will cut down unnecessary e-mails and instant messaging among employees. Social networking usage in the workplace will also allow customers to contact and communicate with the company easily.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Sharing is a very common activity for everyone, but knowledge sharing within an organization is a mind boggling and complicated issue. Knowledge sharing is a process by which the knowledge of an individual is converted into a form that can be understood and used by other individuals. Knowledge sharing alludes to the task to help other people with knowledge, and to collaborate with others to solve problems, develop new ideas, or implement processes.

There are three generations of knowledge sharing according to (Bellefroid, 2012):

- **First generation:** It's a traditional way of knowledge sharing with the concept of codification and storage. This traditional way can easily be supported by information technologies.
- **Second generation**: It focuses on the social component, personalization and the way individuals co-operate and communicate. Formal and informal opportunities can be utilized like mentoring, coaching or face-to-face meetings. Codification is mostly used

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as a beginning point, where new employees can discover what employees know and what knowledge is available. Personalization is used to see the application of the available knowledge.

- **Third generation**: Social networks are the new ways to get connected with the experts and to search for knowledge outside the organization. Utilizing social media tools enables less physical contact between employees.

Organizations have urgent need to pay careful attention to effective knowledge sharing, which is a key significance for their success and to achieve competitive advantage. Knowledge sharing can be materialized in a written form through IT systems or by means of face-to-face communications. It is important for the next generation managers to provide opportunities to individuals to share their knowledge. Organizations should stimulate a need to share knowledge among a group of people. When this need appears, physical or electronic spaces are likely to be utilized for knowledge sharing purposes.

II. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Today, the consistent pressure on business to ceaselessly innovate and the expanding capability of information technologies to encourage extensive and more distributed communication are driving organizations to use social media networking tools to enhance business execution. These tools help individuals to connect, communicate and collaborate and have changed the way we share knowledge. Research within the zone of social media and knowledge sharing is still in an early stage. The rising penetration of internet globally, rising rate of digitalization across industrial infrastructures, constantly increasing social media followers and the mounting number of individuals using mobile devices have also intensified the need for excellent knowledge management in the global market. Extensive research has been done about knowledge sharing. But a very limited research has been done about using social media networking on knowledge sharing in IT companies in Chennai.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hossein Nezakati (2015) explained the role of information technology in tourism, but still there is a lack of study to reveal how social media promote knowledge sharing processes. The purpose of this study is to understand knowledge sharing in social media in tourism sector. Specific concentration is on integration of tacit knowledge sharing during pre-travelling decision making. The rapid development of the information technology and Web 2.0 applications has profound impacts on tourism industry. This study discussed the significance of knowledge sharing in social media for sustainability and success of hospitality and tourism sector. Furthermore, the review of the literature reveals that information technology is highly effective in supporting knowledge dissemination, communication and collaboration in tourism and travel industry. Moreover, the significant role of social media in pre-trip travel planning and decision making was reviewed.

Jia-Xiang Chai and Kuo-Kuang Fan (2017) explained that social media plays a role in the development of a personal knowledge system and personal creativity. Author developed a theoretical model to analyze the relation between social media and creative expression in design education. Based on the flow theory, the generativity theory and TAM. A correlation is seen between the usability dimension of social media and the creative expression dimension, with an especially significant positive connection between perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, as well as capturing and challenging. The adoption intention of social media is positively correlated with creative expression, while the usability dimension of social media has positive correlation with broadenings and negative correlation with surroundings; however, neither is significant. This reveals that aimlessly accumulating knowledge through social media will not help students improve their creativity; instead, overusing social media hinders one from understanding the real world and gaining inspiration.

Leonardi and Paul (2017) suggested that social media may be useful for knowledge sharing because they are leaky pipes for communication - the directionality and content of a particular message is visible to people not involved in it. However, social media are only useful for knowledge sharing if some people contribute knowledge that can leak from them and others retrieve knowledge that is leaking. The author interviewed with employees from a financial services firm to develop a typology of reasons why new employees would not want to contribute what they know to a social media or retrieve from it knowledge contributed by others. Then, he used existing theory on knowledge sharing in organizations, coupled with recent writings about social media affordances, to develop propositions about how these barriers to knowledge sharing might be effectively overcome through strategic use of the social media affordances themselves. Individuals need to willingly contribute knowledge by communicating with others through social media and following the communications of others so that they can retrieve knowledge. Although the motivation of contribution and retrieval is a perennial obstacle for knowledge sharing, the affordances of the social media that are just now entering many workplaces may provide unique and improved abilities at overcoming these obstacles.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this research Descriptive Research Design has been used by the researcher.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Primary Data were collected with the help of questionnaire. The participation of this study was voluntary. The completed questionnaires were exported from GoogleDocs to SPSS files. The questionnaire contains 17 questions and 68 statements. Five point Likert scale has been used to frame the 68 statements, where 1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. This research has been conducted in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Secondary data were collected form Journals, Newspapers, Dissertations etc.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

In this study the researcher adopted convenience sampling technique through non random sampling method. Convenience sampling procedure was used to obtain those

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units or people most conveniently available and to obtain a large number of completed questions quickly.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

The primary data were collected by the researcher with the help of the self constructed questionnaire. The collected data were coded and processed through SPSS package version 16. The researcher has used the following statistical tools to analyze the collected data.

- t-test
- One way ANOVA
- Correlation Analysis

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the interdependence among Age, Gender, Experience and Knowledge sharing.
2. To determine the relationship among Creativity, Social capital and Altruism.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table: 1 Variance between Creativity, Social Capital with Age of the Employees

Knowledge sharing	Age	Mean	SD	t-Value	p-Value	H0
Creativity	21-30	35.57	5.66	-1.630	.104	Accepted
	31-40	36.83	4.13			
Social Capital	21-30	33.10	7.13	-4.095	.001	Rejected
	31-40	36.91	2.84			

Source: Primary data (Significant level 5%)

Null Hypothesis (H0) – There is no significant difference between creativity, social capital, with age of the employees working in top ten IT companies.

t-test was performed to find out the significant difference between creativity, social capital and age groups of the employees working in top ten IT companies. The result reveals that there is no significant difference among the age groups of the employees and their creativity where, t= -1.630; p= 0.104 with mean value= 35.57 and SD= 5.66 for employees in age group between 21-30. For employees in the age group between 31-40 with the mean value= 36.83 and SD=4.13. Considering the mean value and SD value of different age groups, creativity is high for employees with age group 21-30 compared to the employees under the age group of 31-40. Since there is no significant difference existing between age groups and creativity, Null hypothesis (H0) is accepted.

The above table shows that there exists a significant difference between age groups and social capital of the IT employees where, t= -4.095; p= 0.001 at 5% level of significance with the mean value= 33.10 and SD= 7.13 for employees within the age group between 21-30 and for employees in the age group between 31-40 the mean value= 36.91 and SD= 2.84. Therefore social capital helps in sharing knowledge among individuals in different age groups though social media. Considering the standard deviation of social capital value, the employees who are under the age group of 21- 30 have more trust, obligation and identification than the employees under the age group of 31-40. Since there is a significant difference between the age groups and social capital, null hypothesis (H0) is rejected.

Table: 2 Variance between Creativity, Social Capital with Gender of the Employees

Knowledge Sharing	Gender	Mean	SD	t-Value	p-Value	H0
Creativity	Male	36.36	5.03	1.597	.111	Accepted
	Female	35.37	5.68			
Social Capital	Male	34.02	6.56	.373	.709	Accepted
	Female	33.74	6.77			

Source: Primary data (Significant at 5% level)

Null Hypothesis (H0) – There is no significant difference between creativity, social capital, with gender of the employees working in top ten IT companies.

t-test was performed to find out the significant difference between creativity and gender of the employees working in top IT companies. The result reveals that there is no significant difference between gender of the employees and their creativity where, t= 1.597; p= .111 with mean value= 36.36 and SD= 5.03 among male employees and mean value= 35.37 and SD= 5.68 among female employees. Considering the standard deviation value of different gender, creativity is higher than for female employees compared to that of male employees. Since there is no significant difference existing between gender and creativity, the Null hypothesis (H0) is accepted.

The above table reveals that there is no significant variation between social capital and gender of the employees working in top IT companies. The result revealed that there is no significant difference between gender of the employees and social capital, where, t= .373; p= .709 with mean value= 34.02 and SD= 6.56 among male employees and mean value= 33.74 and SD= 6.77 among female employees. Considering the standard deviation value of different gender the female employees have more trust, obligation and identification on sharing knowledge through social media as compared to that of male employees. Since there is no significant difference existing between gender and social capital, Null hypothesis (H0) is accepted.

Table: 3 Variance between Creativity, Social Capital with Experience of the Employees

Knowledge sharing	Experience	Mean	SD	F-value	P-value
Creativity	less than 1 year	39.00	1.04	7.134	.001
	1-5 years	36.08	5.84		
	5-10 years	34.80	4.99		
	above 10 years	41.00	.001		
Social capital	less than 1 year	34.50	6.78	5.106	.002
	1-5 years	34.95	7.01		
	5-10 years	32.31	6.24		
	above 10 years	37.50	.52		

(Source: Primary data) Significant level 5%

Null Hypothesis (H0) – There is no significant variation between creativity, social capital, altruism, collaboration and internal branding with experience of the employees working in top ten IT companies.

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One way ANOVA was performed to find out the significant variation between creativity and experience of the employees working in top IT companies. The result reveals that there is a significant difference between experience of the employees and their creativity, where, F= 7.134; p= .001 at 5% level of significance with the mean value= 39.000 and SD= 1.044 for employees having experience of less than 1 year, with the mean value= 36.083 and SD=5.843 for employees with 1-5 years of experience. Mean value= 34.804 and SD= 4.999 for employees having 5-10 years of experience. Mean value=41.000 and SD=.001 for employees having above 10 years of experience. Considering the standard deviation value of experience of the employees, creativity is high among employees having 1-5 years of experience other employees having more experience. Since there is a significant difference between and creativity and experience among the employees, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected.

There exist a significant variation between social capital and experience of the employees working in top IT companies. The result reveals that there is a significant difference existing between experience of the employees and social capital, where, F= 5.106; p= .002 at 5% level of significance with the mean value= 34.500 and SD= 6.789 for employees having experience of less than 1 year, with the mean value= 34.958 and SD= 7.015 for employees with 1-5 years of experience. Mean value= 32.315 and SD= 6.244 for employees having 5-10 years of experience. Mean value= 37.500 and SD= .5222 for employees having above 10 years of experience Considering the standard deviation value of the experience, the employees having 1-5 years of experience have more trust, obligation and identification on sharing knowledge through social media than that of other employees having more experiences. Since there is a significant difference existing between social capital and designation, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected.

Multiple Comparisons (Tukey HSD)

Knowledge sharing	Experience		Mean Difference	P-value
Creativity	less than 1 year	1-5 years	2.916	.253
		5-10 years	4.195	.042*
		above 10 years	-2.000	.787
	1-5 years	less than 1 year	-2.916	.253
		5-10 years	1.278	.181
		above 10 years	-4.916	.011*
	5-10 years	less than 1 year	-4.195	.042*
		1-5 years	-1.278	.181
		above 10 years	-6.195	.001*
	above 10 years	less than 1 year	2.000	.787
		1-5 years	4.916	.011*
		5-10 years	6.195	.001*
	less than 1 year	1-5 years	-.458	.996
		5-10 years	2.184	.685
		above 10 years	-3.000	.675
	1-5 years	less than 1 year	.458	.996
		5-10	2.642	.005*
Social capital		years		
		above 10 years	-2.541	.568
	5-10 years	less than 1 year	-2.184	.685
		1-5 years	-2.642	.005*
		above 10 years	-5.184	.044*
	above 10 years	less than 1 year	3.000	.675
		1-5 years	2.541	.568
		5-10 years	5.184	.044*

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Source: Primary data

The above table shows multiple comparisons between employees experience and Creativity, Social capital, Altruism, Collaboration, Internal Branding. It shows which groups differed from each other. In Tukey post-hoc test it is shows that there is a significant difference in role of creativity with years of experience less than 1 year and 5-10 years (p-value .042) which is less than .05. Experience 1-5 years and above 10 years (p-value.011) which is less than .05. Experience 5-10 years and less than 1 year , above 10 years p-value .042 and .001 which is less than .05. above 10 years and 1-5 years , 5-10 years p-value .011 and .001 which is less than .05. 5-10 years and 1-5 years and above 10 years Role of Social capital between1-5 years and 5-10 years p-value .005 which is less than .05. 5-10 years and 1-5 years, above 10 years p- value=.005 and p-value=.044 which is less than .05. Above 10 years and 5-10 years p-value=.044 which is less than .05.

Table:4 Correlation Analysis Between Creativity, Idea Generation and Organizational Environment

Si no	Variables		r- value	P-value
1	Creativity	Idea generation	.839**	.001
		Organizational environment	.895**	.001
2	Idea generation	Organizational environment	.507**	.001

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (Sources: Primary data)

Null Hypothesis (H0) – There is no significant relationship between creativity, idea generation and organizational environment.

From the above table it is clear that creativity is highly correlated with idea generation (.839) and organizational environment (.895). This shows there is a significant relationship (.001) between creativity, idea generation and organizational environment. This means, idea generation and a good organizational environment facilitates creativity among employees working in top IT companies.

Idea generation is positively correlated with organizational environment (.507) and shows there is a significant relationship (.001) between idea generation and organizational environment at 5% level of significance. Therefore, alternative hypothesis accepted (H1). This means, a good organizational environment can generate

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creative ideas among the employees in top 10 IT companies.

Table: 5 Correlation Analyses among Trust, Obligation, Identification And Social Capital

Si No	Variables		r- value	p-value
1	Social capital	Trust	.904**	.001
		Obligation	.772**	.001
		Identification	.910**	.001
2	Trust	Obligation	.552**	.001
		Identification	.684**	.001
3	Obligation	Identification	.675**	.001

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (source: primary data)

Null Hypothesis (H0) – There is no significant relationship between social capital, trust, obligation and identification.

From the above table it is clear that social capital is highly and positively correlated with trust (.904), obligation (.772) and identification (.910). There exist a significant relationship (.001) between social capital and trust, obligation and identification at 5% level of significance. Therefore, alternative hypothesis accepted (H1). This means, that social capital is accumulated when the employees have trust, obligation and identification when sharing their knowledge through social media networking.

Trust is positively correlated with obligation (.552) and identification (.684) and there exist a significant relationship (.001) between trust, obligation and identification at 5% level of significance. Therefore, alternative hypothesis accepted (H1).This means, that when the individuals trust other members and share / receive knowledge they feel obliged and identified through social media.

Obligation is positively correlated with identification (.675) and there exist a significant relationship (.000) between obligation and identification at 5% level of significance. Therefore, alternative hypothesis accepted (H1). This means the employees working in top 10 IT companies feel obliged when they are identified and feel a sense of belongingness towards various communities in social media networking.

Table: 6 Correlation Analysis among Hedonic Motivation, Reputation, Reciprocity and Altruism

Si No	Variables		r- value	p-value
1	Altruism	Hedonic motivation	.977**	.001
		Reputation	.806**	.001
		Reciprocity	.854**	.001
2	Hedonic motivation	Reputation	.716**	.001
		Reciprocity	.805**	.001
3	Reputation	Reciprocity	.492**	.001

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (source: primary data)

Null Hypothesis (H0) – There is no significant relationship between altruism, hedonic motivation, reputation and reciprocity.

From the above table it is clear that altruism is highly and positively correlated to hedonic motivation (.977), reputation (.806) and reciprocity (.854). There exist a significant relationship (.001) between altruism and hedonic motivation, reputation and reciprocity at 5% level of significance. This means, the employees show an altruistic behavior when they are hedonically motivated and participate it tasks to enhance their reputation and reciprocate on sharing their knowledge with other members through social media networking.

Hedonic motivation is positively correlated to reputation (.716) and reciprocity (.805). There exist a significant relationship (.000) between hedonic motivation and reputation and reciprocity at 1% level of significance. Therefore, alternative hypothesis (H1) accepted. This means, hedonically motivated employees enhance their reputation by participating in task and share their knowledge through social media and believe in reciprocating their knowledge to other members in social media.

Reputation is positively correlated with reciprocity (.492) and there is a significant relationship (.000) between reputation and reciprocity at 1% level of significance. Therefore, alternative hypothesis (H1) accepted. This means, the employees reciprocate on sharing their knowledge when the reputation of the members increases.

VI. FINDINGS

- There is no significant difference among the age groups of the employees and their creativity, where t= -1.630; p= 0.104 with the mean value= 35.575 and SD= 5.668 for employees in the age group 21-30. For employees with age group 31-40, the mean value= 36.836 and SD= 4.1399.
- There exists a significant difference between age groups and social capital of the IT employees, where t= -4.095; p= 0.001 at 5% level of significance with the mean value= 33.100 and SD= 7.13105 for employees in the age group between 21-30 and for employees with age group between 31-40 with the mean value= 36.9180 and SD= 2.847.
- Creativity is highly and positively correlated with idea generation (.839) and organizational environment (.895).
- Idea generation is positively correlated with organizational environment (.507)
- Social capital is highly and positively correlated with trust (.904), obligation (.772) and identification (.910).
- Trust is positively correlated with obligation (.552) and identification (.684)

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- Obligation is positively correlated with identification (.675)
- Altruism is highly and positively correlated with hedonic motivation (.977), reputation (.806) and reciprocity (.854).
- Hedonic motivation is positively correlated to reputation (.716) and reciprocity (.805).
- Reputation is positively correlated with reciprocity (.492).

VII. SUGGESTIONS

Employees have their profiles with others in their network displaying brand building behavior in social media. They are more likely to endorse their employer brand in their personal online interaction believing that their contacts might have a similar interest in the employer brand. It is suggested that having an employer brand community makes it easier for the employees to endorse the brand on social media sites and by blurring the boundaries between personal and professional events helps employees to spread more information about the employer culture throughout social media. Companies need to include their employees in brand content generation and invite them to be key participants in brand social media activities as many companies do not compel employees in sharing about their brand. At the very least, contents should be presented in a format that is easy for the employees to share and communicate in real time.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Organizations can place systems and structures that encourage sharing of knowledge so that employees can refine their ideas and help colleagues to perform their tasks in creative ways. Absorbing the adoption of social media networking within the organization can bring about creativity which leads to idea generation. Knowledge sharing through social media will help in converting the personal knowledge to organizational knowledge. The social media is redefining how companies innovate by connecting people globally and share the ideas in ways that were not explored previously. This study showed that individuals who have high trust and obligation level' are more eager to share knowledge and utilize social media networking sites more and in return increase their social capital through these networking sites more which in return will contribute to the company's overall performance. The IT industry is a resource oriented industry and it becomes quite important to ensure that the knowledge in the minds of resources is safeguarded. It is found that 26% of the knowledge is stored in the average organization is stored in paper and 20% digitally and 42 % is stored in employees heads. There have been many instances where the learning and knowledge is lost when resources move to newer roles or leave the organization. IT company's major assets are not plants, buildings or expensive machineries but its intellectual capital. The major problem with this intellectual capital is that it has legs and walks home every day.

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