The Role of Social Trust in Willingness to Share Tacit and Explicit Knowledge among Faculty Members of University of Sistan and Baluchestan

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Abstract

Due to the importance of knowledge in competitive today's world, understanding of how to enhance employees' knowledge is an essential issue. The objective of the present research is to study the role of social trust on willingness to share tacit and explicit knowledge between faculty members of Sistan and Balouchestan University. Population of the current research is university faculty member of Sistan and Balouchestan in 2013. The sample of this research consists of 155 persons . In order to collect required data to test the research hypothesis, a questionnaire was applied that its validity has been studied using SPSS software and confirmatory functional analysis method in addition to the professors' views and management experts. Reliability is gained respectively 924 and 836 by Cronbach Alpha using SPSS software for a questionnaire measuring social trust and knowledge sharing. Correlation coefficient and multivariable regression were used to analyze and test research hypotheses. The results from this research indicates that the social trust and its components have positive and significant effect on individual's willingness in sharing explicit knowledge and have a few effect on sharing tacit knowledge

Keywords: social trust, tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge, university

Introduction

In the past, most organizations used to apply knowledge of each employee for developing their own personal performance whereas today organizations are trying to utilize knowledge of all employees at the organization's level in order to supply the organizational objectives more than the past and this issue leads to spread management view in tacit knowledge and relevant fields (Hasnavi et al., 2009) How could people be encouraged to share what they know? This is the question most managers raise in the knowledge-based organizations. A great part of university literature and business shows the employees who work together for a long period of time, are more successful in knowledge sharing. Nevertheless, there are a few systematic evidences regarding this why this status is effective on enhancing knowledge transfer? Undoubtedly, the managers wonder what to do without having sufficient understanding of regular connection between employees' interactions (which are typically called "strong relations") and effective knowledge sharing in order to develop valuable knowledge exchange (Levin et al, 2005) and necessity to use knowledge management in the organization in undeniable. Certain factors as globalization, government's minimization, citizen orientation and necessity for citizen's participation require specific attention to the knowledge management. The organizations should be able to manage their knowledge capitals effectively (Ghorbani zadeh and Khaleghinia, 2009). A number of studies have proved regarding organizations and knowledge management that knowledge dispersal increases the firm's performances including capacity of absorption and innovation capability (Liaofi and Chen, 2007, Leo and Philips, 2011).

Chui Li Viu (2010) states knowledge dispersion among team members is required for organizational profitability and maintaining consistency of group at high level. Today, organizations should be able to obtain their required knowledge for creating innovation in their own products and developing their processes along with sharing them among

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their employees and they should be applied in all their activities. Merely through this method the organizations could meet competitive environmental requirements and volatile needs of their customers. On the other hand, the social trust has been considered as the main structure of the social capital by sociology for a long time scholars. So that by developing communications, organizations, institutions, more complexity of the society and increase individualism, they have regarded the social trust essential for collective life continuum. Continuum of life without trust is difficult in the society and the lifecycle is based on trust.

In large metropolises, complexity of relations has created a kind of insecurity for them, so that people feel that communicationg with others and trusting them will bring numerous dangers for them.

Therefore, the main objective of the research based on the importance of knowledge management and social capital and following that the social trust in the organizations is to achieve role of social trust with willingness to share tacit and explicit knowledge among faculty members of Sistan and Balouchestan University. Here, trust ha sbeen considered as a key factor to transfer knowledge. To do this, after reviewing theoretical and experimental literature, we analyses the collected data through questionnaire among faculty members of the university. In the end, based on confirmation or rejection of the research hypotheses, some results and proposals will be submitted.

Theoretical Basis of Research

Social Trust

"Trust" in Axford dictionary means reliance or assurance of a quality or attribute of a person or a thing, or assurance to the truth of someone's saying. An the social trust could be regarded as having optimism toward people in the social relations which has two parts of Trustee and Thruster (individual or group) which facilitates the social relations and holds hidden possibility of benefit or loss in it (Amir Kafi, 2011).

Trust is defined in different ways for different situations and specific fields. Trust is a dynamic, multi-level and multi-dimensional concept. Mayer (1995) states that trust include ability, benevolence and integrity. Mishra (1996) has spread this concept by offering four dimensions of trust, con-

cern, reliability, competence, and clarity (Chen et al., 2010). The social trust is as the main structure of the social capital and the most significant concept rose in the contemporary social sciences.

Rotation of the social structure and comprehensive changes in social, economic and political fields of modern society, and the risks resulting from these changes have considered seriously paying attention to this concept (Book et al, 2009). Ketabi et al. 2008 (Tonix, 2008) state that trust with norms and networks exists in the definitions of social capital, but it is really difficult to achieve the meaning of trust per se.

According to Fokomaya trust refers to an expectation that is rose from a regular, honest and cooperation seeking attitude based on shared norms (Reshadat Jou et al. 2011). Fokomaya also considers trust as an index for the social capital in a sense of collective values of the social networks and cultural behavior forming base of growth and economic constancy.

To him, trust is an expectation rising from a society which has regular behavior, friendly relationships and cooperation and partnership based (Ganji et al, 2010). The social sciences' scholars have interpreted the trust according to their proficiency and point of view that some of these definitions are as below:

Trust is a strong belief to reliability, honesty and ability of an individual, a reliable expectation and based on one claim without testing it (Lion, 2004). Trust is expectation of meeting personal needs and counting on the environment or external source which can meet (Pour Afkari, 2004, Chodari, 2005). He also defined two main types of trust: 1. Cognitive trust: Cognitive reasoning about the reliability of performance and competence 2) Emotional trust: based on the emotional relationship between two persons. Cohen (2003) stated four types of trust: 1): trust based on objective: which seems to be between two persons sharing a common goal, 2) Accountable trust: attempt to predict what the trust party will do, namely it seeks other evidences of the trust, 3) knowledge-based trust: it is raised when people get familiar with each other and interact, 4) trust based on respect: Once both parties have a similar relationship.

Knowledge Distribution or Sharing

Knowledge sharing has been regarded as the most complex scientific fields of knowledge man-

agement which consists of exchanging tacit and explicit knowledge at individual, group or organizational level, so that it leads to creating of collecting knowledge in the organization (Small and Sage, 2006). In one hand, knowledge transfer includes a set of behavior containing knowledge and information exchange and helping others in this regard which is similar to the citizens' behaviors that are done optionally and volunteer in the organizational (Yousefi et al, 2010) quoting Kazemi and Ramezani, 2012). Knowledge sharing includes two processes as knowledge donating and knowledge collecting that the knowledge donating is defined as tendency of a person to share his intellectual capital with others and gathering knowledge, his willingness for discussing, adopt and accept new intellectual capital by his colleagues (De vries et al, 2006).

Knowledge sharing is also defined as transfer activities, knowledge transfer from an individual to another, from group or organization to an individual, from a group or organization to another group or organization and need to individuals' cooperation and groups for mutual benefits and these people help developing their own knowledge based on assurance regarding their own knowledge and using it in the organization (Al-Alawi, 2005).

So that, in the Chinese companies, knowledge sharing has been known as one of the most scientific and practical strategic ways for facing a fully competitive and volatile environment (Zahra Neubaum and Larraneta, 2007). Draker (1999) states that the business environment and global carrier are changing quickly to a competitive environment and the organizations' focus has been on the knowledge value as a significant source (Tong et al. 2013). Hamsou in his research (2008) propose three approaches for knowledge sharing 1) organizational approach based on simplification of knowledge sharing methods using proper processes, structure and management style, 2) approach based on motivation increase for sharing knowledge using monetary and non-monetary activities, 3) approach based on technology for knowledge sharing using proper technology and equipment. In fact, people for sharing mutual benefit and achieving organizational goals from others equally expect, it means knowledge sharing is a two-way process. Sharing knowledge is not only sharing simple information, but also stimulating the exchange of thoughts, experiences and ideas among internal organization individuals (Ismail, Nor and Marjani, 2009).

Tacit and Explicit Knowledge

Common knowledge among employees can be classified into tacit and explicit, for the first time, Michael Polanyi asserted that "we know more than we can say," introduced the concept of tacit knowledge. According to him, the tacit knowledge is placed in the personal area and it guarantees the intersection between any individual and the culture he belongs to. Based on him, the tacit knowledge could be only learnt implicitly that this issue is rooted in his implification from the tacit knowledge combining the tacit power of the mind and power of combination and understanding its relation (Mason and Mc Gary, 2001, quoting Ghorbanizadeh and Khaleghinia, 2009).

On the other hand, the explicit knowledge is a knowledge which is stored officially and systematically and it is regarded by detail and some of codified forms as handy or computer files have been published, in contrast the tacit knowledge is a knowledge which is deeply rooted in action, experience, thought and interference in a specific filed.

Common examples of tacit knowledge includes the ability to ride a bicycle, a baseball player specialized knowledge and skills in debugging computer programs. Therefore, the tacit knowledge is shared much harder than explicit knowledge among employees, so that time, cost and effort for sharing it is significantly more (Rychav and Vysbrg, 2010).

Knowledge, especially tacit knowledge is a key component to the success of any organization and its employees because the tacit knowledge is the basis for the formation of explicit knowledge that could be used as a backup for tacit knowledge and implicit knowledge and the organizational knowledge is formed by the tacit knowledge (Iqbal, 2012). The creation of knowledge is formed through the interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge that Carlsen 2007states four types of knowledge known as Cisse model and it is shown briefly in Table 1:

Table 1- Cisse model (Source: Carlson, 2007 as cited in Abbaszadeh and Meghdati, 2009)

To From	Tacit	Explicit
Tacit	Socialization that makes science understandable	Externalization that creates conceptual knowledge
Explicit	Internalization that creates operational knowledge	Combination that creates a systematic knowledge

In summary, in the existing literature, classification is a knowledge showing our profound understanding and value of goodwill of knowledge diffusion. To the extent that the publication of explicit and tacit knowledge is inherently different, they are likely to be associated with different levels of individual motivations and social capital. Table 2 shows the characteristics of implicit and explicit knowledge:

Table 2- Characteristics of tacit and explicit knowledge (Source: Seifollahi et al. 2009)

(Tacit knowledge)	(Explicit knowledge)
Unexplainable in a determined form	Determinable
Subjective	Objective
Personal	Imprsonal
Difficult in sharing	Easy in sharing
Special texture	Lack of dependency to texture

Trust and Knowledge Sharing

There are three different but relevant processes inside the knowledge management: knowledge creation, knowledge transfer and reuse of knowledge. Knowledge is created when the available knowledge has been exchanged and combined with other data and information or turn to a new knowledge (Chua et al., 2007). Knowledge transfer is happening when the knowledge flows in the organization are flooding from one section of the organization from another. Lack of trust and mutual action is mostly known as knowledge transfer restriction (Merriam-Webster, 2010).

Thus, trust is an important part of the process of knowledge transfer. The reuse of knowledge occurs when the knowledge is packed and they have been regarded for using previous mistakes and learning in the future for the organizations (Chua et al, 2007). Lack of trust between the parties involved in the knowledge transfer prevents from the success of this operation (knowledge transfer).

In knowledge transfer, the trust should be maintained between both parties and the organization inorder to guarantee that the information is true by guarantee of the project success (Tanner, 2010). Trust plays various roles in sharing knowledge as a prerequisite and as its consequence. Organizations as a vehicle in which various human being develop their working knowledge or working experience, and the most effectiveness is due to trust and based on trust between social systems. As a social human in the organization builds its behavior and activities trust-based, the organization will be more effective in achieving the goals (Ebrahimifard et al. 2012).

Activities of knowledge transfer are not dedicated to the interior environment of the organization and for development and progress of the countries' condition and moving toward development, knowledge transfer should be considered that competition is somehow meaningless about the governmental organizations and is more true (Aghaz and Taji, 2013).

But this point stating by Cramer (1999) should be noted: putting trust and knowledge sharing in an organization even when there is numerous evidences based on this fact that trust has significant advantages for organizations and its members is not an easy task (Ebrahimi et al, 2012). Nevertheless, in some organizations as universities, we could focus on certain factors as investing on the knowledge resources which show the organizational commitment and on the amount that people store information in their knowledge store.

Research Background

The results of Negin Taji & Aghaz's results (2013) by the objective of determining concept of trust as a key leverage in transferring real knowledge among experts of a knowledge-based organization shows the status of competence, explicitness and assurance higher than average and status of the organizational identity is average and also status of knowledge sharing inside and outside the unit are both higher than average. In another research by the objective of study the tacit knowledge transfer in office of standard and industrial researches of Fars, has been shown that this organization provides transfer possibility of the tacit knowledge averagely for their own employees. On the other hand, the organization lacks proper culture for knowledge transfer and this culture should be institutionalized using material and non-material rewards (Iqbali, 2012).

Sook Hoo et al. (2012) in his research studies effects of individual motivations and the social capital for tacit and explicit knowledge transfer of the employees that their findings show the integrated landscape of the knowledge model increases the method of developing knowledge transfer of the employees. Moreover, it shows that the organizational rewards have negative effects on intention to diffuse

tacit knowledge of the employees by having positive effect on intention of explicit knowledge diffusion. The results of their analysis confirm that they mutual relations, enjoyment, and social capital significantly contribute to increase the knowledge intentions for implicit and explicit knowledge transfer of the employees. Moreover, these factors have more positive effects in intention of the explicit knowledge compared to the tacit knowledge.

Chang and cHuang (2011) in their own research by aim to study the social capital, personal motivations in knowledge sharing conclude that personal motivations stimulates the participants to help quality of the social knowledge and according to the organizational view, the structure's dimensions (social interaction), relation (trust, recognition and mutual relations), recognition (common language) help the participants cooperate in increasing knowledge quality and quantity of the society as well as this fact that the cooperation of the participants has only moderator effect on the relationship between altruism and the level of knowledge sharing behavior.

Jean and Jang (2011) in a research entitled "the impact of multi-level nature from social capital in knowledge transfer" and they have proposed that employee network situations such as distance and structural equivalence affect knowledge transfer. Rychav and Vysberg (2009) showed that employees who currently diffuse their own tacit knowledge are most likely willing to share their explicit knowledge in order to gain monetary and non-monetary benefits. Davison and Gu (2011) examined the reliability and focus on intention of tacit and explicit knowledge in the Chinese companies and they have argued that based on the type of knowledge they have different levels of impact.

Since we have reviewed the theoretical and experimental literature of the subject of study, based on the objective of the current research which is study effect of social trust on individuals' willingness in sharing tacit and explicit knowledge, we present the conceptual frames and hypotheses of the current research:
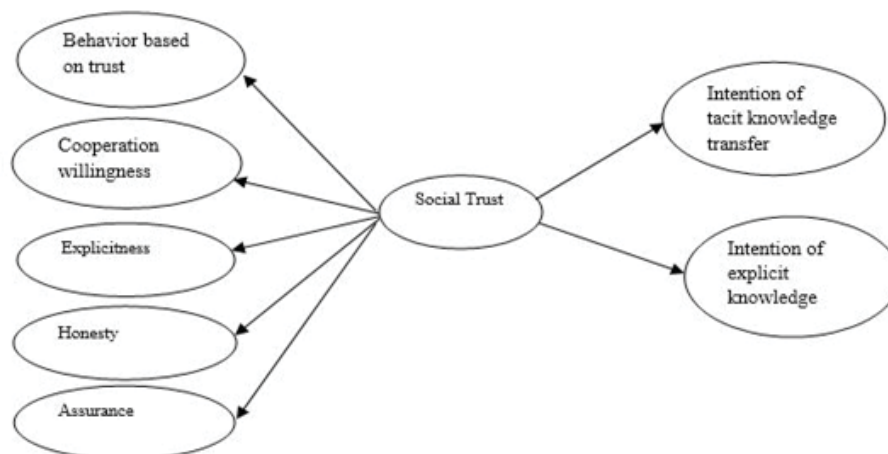

Figure 1. Conceptual model of research.

The Main Hypotheses of Research

1- Social trust has positive effect on individuals' willingness to share explicit knowledge.

2- Social trust has positive effect on individuals' willingness to share tacit knowledge.

The Sub-Hypotheses of Research

• Trust-based attitude has positive effect on individuals' willingness to share explicit and tacit knowledge.

• Willingness of cooperation seeking has positive effect on individuals' willingness to share explicit and tacit knowledge.

• Explicitness has positive effect on individuals' willingness to share explicit and tacit knowledge.

• Honesty has positive effect on individuals' willingness to share explicit and tacit knowledge.

• Assurance has positive effect on individuals' willingness to share explicit and tacit knowledge.

Materials and Methods

The research method which has been used in this research was applicable based on the research objective so that the researcher intends to offer

some solutions in order to enhance knowledge diffusion at the university among students. Based on the data collecting, the research method is survey, namely the researcher in the society by collecting required data intends determining the social trust effects on intention of diffusing tacit and explicit knowledge. The population of the present research includes all members of faculty members of Sistan and Balouchestan University in 2013 and the sampling in this study is 155 persons of these people. In this article, for collecting theoretical basis and research literature, previous researches and library studies have been used and for data collection to test research hypotheses, researcher-made questionnaire was designed by Likert range including 37 items to measure the social trust and dependent variables, and for measuring validity of this questionnaire, two classification of content validity and structure validity have been considered that the validity of the content has been studied by management professors and experts . Moreover, the confirmatory functional analysis ha sbeen used for the construct validity from which 5 questions have been eliminated due to improper validity. Moreover, in this research for measuring reliability of the research, Cronbach Alpha has been used. The value of the extracted Cronbach Alpha for each research variable has been indicated in the below table.

The results indicate independents and dependents variables has kmo coefficient higher than 70 percent, therefore they have essential trust capability for analysis. As shown in the above table, confirmatory factor analysis of items related to social trust has five latent factors that determine totally 68.587% of the changes of the observed variables which are significant at the 99% level, kmo is calculated for social trust (.825) and for the dependent variables of sharing of explicit knowledge is (.775) and for sharing tacit knowledge was (0729) over 70 percent and significant that shows ability and suitability of items. Additionally, the extracted Cronbach's Alpha for the items of measuring social trust and diffusion of tacit and explicit knowledge is respectively 0.836 and 0.924 that displays their acceptable reliability.

Data Analysis

In order to study relations between research variables and also testing research hypotheses, correlation and regression have been used. Firstly, in table 3, the correlation between research variables has been displayed and the results of regression for the research hypotheses based on the output of SPSS 19 are studied as follow.

Table 3. Correlation between research variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Social trust	*							
Sharing and taccit knowledge	.660**	*						
Sharing and Explicit knowledge	.598**	.362**	*					
Trust based attitude	.810**	.639**	.318**	*				
Cooperation seeking willingness	.842**	.417**	.534**	.745**	*			
Explicitness	.807**	.452**	.652**	.508**	.636**	*		
Honesty	.801**	.501**	.469**	.474**	.549**	.647**	*	
Assurance	.767**	.722**	333**	.621**	.521**	.419**	.671**	*

Results

Hypothesis Testing

In order to study and test the research hypotheses, multivariable regression has been used. The results relevant to the regression test for each hypothesis is have been mentioned briefly in tables 4 and 5. According to this table, it could conclude that the first main hypothesis of this research is confirmed and the social trust has positive effect on willingness for sharing explicit knowledge. In addition, the results from the regression show that all components of the social trust except honesty has positive effect on sharing explicit knowledge and among them, the assurance with regression coefficient of 0/821 ha stem most effect.

As table 4 shows all undependable variables have been entered into the regression and determined to-

tally 56 % of variance of the dependent variable. The results from all variables, except honesty have been

significant, the most standardized coefficient of Beta is related to the assurance variable (B=, 821).

Table 4. Multivariate regression to determine the willingness of employees to share explicit knowledge

	R²	Independent Variables	Beta Standard Coefficient(B)	T	F	SIG
		Social trust	0.761	4.602		0.001
		Trust-based attitude	0.598	3.347		0.001
Multi-variable regression		Cooperation seeking willingness	0.355	2.56		.000
	0.568	Explicitness	0.61	3.548		0.001
		Honesty	0.183	1.348	35.8	0.169
		Assurance	0.827	6.198		.000

For example, by each unit of increase in assurance variable, sharing explicit knowledge is increased by 821/. Or by each unit of increase in the social trust, sharing the explicit knowledge is increased by 761/ %.

Moreover, based on the data on table 4, it could conclude that the second main hypothesis of this research is verified and the social trust has positive effect on willingness to share tacit knowledge among people. The calculated regression coefficient for this

relation is 0.361 that shows at the error level lower than 0.05 the second man hypothesis of the research is verified and the social trust has positive effect on willingness to share tacit knowledge among people. Of course, this effectiveness is at moderate level. But among the components of the social trust, only cooperation seeking willingness has positive and significant effect on sharing tacit knowledge by any individual and other components hasn't power of effectiveness and they aren't significant.

Table 5. Multivariate regression to determine the willingness of employees to share tacit knowledge

	R²	Independent Variables	Beta Standard Coefficient(B)	T	F	SIG
		Social trust	0.361	2.208		29
		Trust-based attitude	.351	1.771		0.079
Multi-variable regression		Cooperation seeking willingness	0.563	6.011		.000
	0.46	Explicitness	0.2	1.013		0.313
		Honesty	0.135	1.012	25.402	0.314
		Assurance	0.287	1.651		0.101

As table 5 displays, all independent variables have been entered into the regression model that totally interprets around 46% (R2) of dependent standard deviation, but the results have been only for variables of the social trust and aspect of cooperation seeking willingness have been significant and other variables have no positive effect on the dependent variable. They could be the rising why the tacit knowledge is a knowledge which is rooted

practically in experience, thought and intervention in a specific field. Consequently, time, cost and attempt for sharing it are remarkably more.

Conclusion and Discussion

The social trust has been considered long ago by social thinkers, due to expansion of ties, organizations, institutions and increasing complexity

of the society through the recent decades has been necessary for continuation of collective life. This study by aim of reviewing effects of the social trust on individuals' willingness in sharing knowledge depends on the type of the knowledge to be transferred whether tacit or explicit. This study shows that the social trust has positive and significant effect on both tacit and explicit knowledge and this effectiveness is more on knowledge transfer of the explicit knowledge compared to the tacit one. That these findings overlap with results of HOO et al's research (2012). The developed social trust plays an important role in knowledge transfer in social environments.

When members have focused interaction with each other and have confidence to each other, therefore they tend to sharing reliable knowledge and they may present high quality knowledge to someone who shares a common language. According to the organizational view, the social trust helps to rely on people for cooperating in increasing quality and quantity of the society's knowledge. Positive and strong effects and relations of the social trust on the employees' intention in transferring tacit and explicit knowledge have fruitful consequences for employees of an organization or knowledge management.

Firstly, organizations could activate understood mutual relationships from knowledge employees by focusing and promoting mutual nature of the knowledge interaction in internal organization at personal and group level between units of knowledge creation as enhancement of innovation projects at team or unit level. Secondly, organizations could measure the perceived enjoyment of the knowledge transfer of the employees through linking components of the knowledge transfer with various missions of the social responsibility of the company and the social activities in which the knowledge transfer to each other could leads to equal increase or more self-confidence and satisfaction.

They can also identify and recognize individuals and teams to participate in knowledge transfer through festivals of widespread organizational knowledge management. And finally, the knowledge management or management unit of human resource could enhance the social trust of the organization through identification of the social relations in the organization by analyzing the social networks and growing relationships with colleagues among the employees using social programs.

Limitations of the study

This study provides new findings from effects related to the social trust and its components for the motivation of knowledge transfer of the employees that it has been ignored so far. Despite the new findings, this study has the following limitations and it is hoped that future research will overcome them. Although this study focuses on the social trust and transferring tacit and explicit knowledge go the employees, other factors may have been involved as type of industry (governmental or private) and published knowledge by organizations (system-based on-line society against line-based). Since in this study the collected data have been taken by sectional method, it is not fully captured by the dynamics tacit and explicit knowledge transfer intention for the employees. As the results show a momentary image, it is expected that future researchers uses longitudinal data collecting method enabling them to study the effects through a dynamic view.

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