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# **Knowledge Sharing Idiosyncrasies of Research Scholars at CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, India**

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### **Abstract**

The main aim of the present study is to investigate the knowledge sharing behaviour of research scholars at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCS HAU), Hisar, India. To understand and reveal the knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars, various factors have been covered such as knowledge sharing definition, knowledge sharing attitude, communication channels preferred for knowledge sharing, barriers of knowledge sharing, knowledge sharing motivators, and other factors related to knowledge sharing in an academic institution. For the present study, survey method was adopted with the aid of online structured questionnaire for the purpose of data collection. Total 125 research scholars were approached electronically and shared questionnaires through WhatsApp groups and personal e-mails. Out of total 125, 114 valid questionnaires were collected and considered for final analysis, which representing the response rate of about 91.2 per cent. The findings reveals that about 66% of the respondents were in the opinion that sharing knowledge with peers shall benefit all and majority of the respondents possessed a positive attitude towards knowledge sharing and were aware of its importance in their learning process. The face-to-face interaction for sharing knowledge among the respondents is the most preferred communication channel for majority of the respondents (81.58%); however, some major barriers of knowledge sharing among the research scholars have also been noticed. In order to overcome these barriers, the researchers suggest that academic institutions may foster cordial relationship among the research scholars by providing sufficient interaction opportunities. In the end, practical implication of this study has also been discussed.

**Keywords:** Knowledge sharing, Knowledge sharing behaviour, Idiosyncrasies, Motivational factors, Research Scholars, Agricultural sciences, CCSHAU, Hisar.

### **1. Introduction**

In this digital era, everyone is being affected by competition in every field of specialization. If any nation wants to be a rich or developed country, the economy should be strong of that country. The economy is now influenced widely by the information or knowledge based industries. Now, those countries are considered as rich or strong whose generated and conserved information and knowledge for the benefit of their citizens. So today's economy is totally recognized as knowledge based economy. "Knowledge is increasingly becoming 'the'

resource, rather than 'a' resource for wealth generation. It is widely recognized that knowledge is the critical asset to individual as well as organization to succeed in the increasingly competitive environment" (Quoted in Khan and Ali, 2017). Therefore, how to make use of knowledge in order to create the greatest value is becoming the central concern and debate in the new economy.

Davenport and Prusak (1998) defined that "knowledge is a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. It originates and is applied in the minds of knower's". Evidently, "knowledge is nothing, but when it is shared to someone or group of peers it can get its values" (Mallasi and Ainin, 2015). One of the most important components of knowledge is knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing is becomes well-liked nowadays among peoples, organizations, institutions and even among countries. In this digital era, everyone can share their knowledge to anyone all over the world without any restriction or intimidation. Hence, knowledge is power and "Knowledge sharing refers to the dissemination of explicit or tacit knowledge, ideas, experiences or even skills from one individual to another individual student or group of students" (Wei *et al.*, 2012). In the words of Mohd, Goh and Fathi (2012, p. 694), "knowledge sharing can be defined as one of the activities that knowledge is transfer among the individuals to convert it to become valuable information and resources. In fact, knowledge sharing is the communication process in which one or two people participate in knowledge exchange in order to develop new information, new knowledge, new techniques, new solutions, new technologies, new products and so on". As explained by Lbanez de Opacua (2012) "knowledge sharing is considered one of the most critical activities within knowledge management for several reasons. Knowledge sharing is required in order to transfer tacit knowledge among individuals (through socialisation) and to try to make it as explicit as possible (through externalisation, *e.g.*, articulating experiences on reports)". "Though the matter of knowledge sharing is significantly equipollent for knowledge based institutions such as universities, where knowledge generation, dissemination and solicitation are imbued in the culture of institutions" (Cheng, Ho and Lau, 2009). Evidently, universities do have an embedded knowledge culture but that culture is individualistic in nature and to some extent self-serving (Fullwood, Rowley and Delbridge, 2013). "This poses interesting challenges for universities that seek to engage in initiatives that might improve the ways in which knowledge is created, shared and disseminated" (Donate and Canales, 2012).

In view of the above discussed concept of knowledge sharing, the aim of the present study is to investigate knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCS HAU), Hisar, India. It is expected that the result of this study will provide an insight to comprehend knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars, which will facilitate universities to select the finest methods to develop and nurture a more collaborative and knowledge sharing culture.

## **2. Literature review**

In order to understand the concept and various aspects of knowledge sharing, a comprehensive literature has been reviewed. A number of studies have been conducted in various educational institutions worldwide in order to explore the knowledge sharing

idiosyncrasies in academic institutions. Some of the studies have been reviewed here as follows:

Areekkuzhiyil (2019) conducted a study to know the attitude towards knowledge sharing among the undergraduate students in Kerala (India) and revealed that there is a positive attitude towards knowledge sharing among undergraduate students in Kerala and also reveals that the attitude towards knowledge sharing has been differing significantly with respect to gender, stream of study and type of institution. On the other hand, Khan and Ali (2017) investigated knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars at AMU, Aligarh and found that the respondents understand the importance of knowledge sharing and possessed positive attitude towards knowledge sharing though there were significant differences in the knowledge sharing pattern. In another study, Mallasi and Ainin (2015) investigating knowledge sharing behavior in academic environment in the six public Malaysian universities in Klang Vally and found that non-monetary factors such as enjoyment of helping others, self efficacy, interpersonal trust have a significant impact on knowledge sharing but reputation does not have much impact, while religiosity plays a moderating role in the relationship between non-monetary factors and knowledge sharing behavior. Dzandu, Boateng, and Tang (2014) conducted a study to explore the knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of University students in Ghana and revealed that knowledge sharing behaviour of the students was significantly related to five of the human and environmental factors; however, not significantly dependent on their personal characteristics. Similarly, Islam, Ikeda and Islam (2013) conducted a study to explore the knowledge sharing behaviour influences of information science and library management faculties in Bangladesh and found no significant difference between knowledge sharing behaviour of LIS educators with different Major Research Questions (MRQs), while significant relationship  $0.000$  ( $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ ) was found between attitude of educators towards knowledge sharing and their intention to share knowledge.

While exploring the knowledge sharing behavior of postgraduate students in University of Malaya, Usika, Ismail, & Khan (2013) found that the motivating factors for knowledge sharing among postgraduate students differ from what is found in the corporate world, due to the difference in goals of students, while factors such as extrinsic rewards had no impact on the knowledge sharing behavior of the respondents. In addition, Mohd., Goh and Fathi (2012) conducted a study to know the factors affecting motivations to share knowledge among university students of Malaysia and found that “undergraduates in Malaysian university were aware and has positive attitudes towards sharing knowledge despite of many factor inhibits for sharing their knowledge; however, lack of information factor was the main reason of not sharing knowledge because the students were afraid that they will provide the wrong information”. Nordin, Daud and Osman (2012) conducted a study to explore the knowledge sharing behavior among academic staff at a public higher education institution in Malaysia and found that level of perceiving and implementing knowledge sharing behavior among academic staff at a Public HEI in Malaysia exist but not openly or strongly practiced. While conducting a study on Jordanian student’s attitudes and perceptions towards knowledge sharing in institutions of higher education, Hussein and Nassuora (2011) revealed that almost students showed a positive attitude towards knowledge sharing and feel very powerfully about the signification of sharing of knowledge in

Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), whereas it was suggested that more efforts must be made and awareness must be created to guarantee that students understand the advantages of sharing of knowledge. Yuen and Majid (2007) conducted a study to investigate the knowledge sharing patterns of undergraduate students in Singapore and explored that “generally, students displayed a positive attitude towards knowledge sharing and were appreciative of its importance in peer learning; however, it was interesting to note that the respondents were less inclined to share knowledge for academic activities that were graded”.

In order to cope up with facts and factors discussed above, universities particularly in India need to design a knowledge sharing policy and develop a knowledge management or sharing system for the academic community through which they get a platform to contribute their knowledge for the community. Therefore, this study provides an insight into the knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar (India).

### **3. CCS HAU, Hisar**

“After the division of Punjab State, the first established university in Haryana State in 1970 is Haryana Agricultural University, which is one of the Asia's biggest agricultural universities. In 1991, it was renamed after India's seventh Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh. Thus, now it is known as Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar. The university covers an area of 8,645 Acres, out of which, 7,219 acres at main campus and 1,426 acres at sub-campuses. The University has five colleges in its main campus with different departments, *i.e.*, College of Agriculture (COA), College of Home Science (COHS), College of Agriculture Engineering & Technology (COAE&T), College of Basic Science & Humanities (COBS&H), and College of Fisheries Science (COFS). The University has two more colleges in its outstation campuses other than these five colleges situated in main campus, *i.e.*, College of Agriculture, Kaul (COAK) and College of Agriculture, Bawal (COAB). The University is affiliated to Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)” (CCS HAU, 2020).

### **4. Objectives**

The main objective of the present study is to find out the knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCS HAU), Hisar, India. However, the following specific objectives were intended to be achieved:

- To explore the knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars of CCS HAU, Hisar
- To comprehend the concept of knowledge sharing among the research scholars of CCS HAU, Hisar
- To investigate the attitude of research scholars towards knowledge sharing
- To know the motivations behind knowledge sharing among the research scholars
- To find out the most preferred communication channel for knowledge sharing
- To identify the factors that obstructed knowledge sharing
- To provide necessary suggestions for fostering knowledge sharing culture in academic institutions

### **5. Scope and limitation of the study**

The scope of the present study is limited to explore the knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar (India).

## 6. Research methodology

A descriptive research method, *i.e.*, survey method has been used to investigate the knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar. The population of the present study consisted Ph. D. research scholars studying in different departments of Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCS HAU), Hisar, India. Simple random sampling method was used for distribution of questionnaires through online mode among the research scholars. To collect the data, a small online questionnaire was designed. Based on the review of related literature and objectives of the study, the items of the questionnaires were adapted from prior studies in the field of knowledge sharing such as Yuen & Majid, 2007; Hsu *et al.*, 2007; Kilroy, 2009; Lee & Choi, 2003; Kuo & Young, 2008; however, it was modified to suit the present study. The questionnaire was sent to 125 Ph. D. research scholars through e-mail and various WhatsApp groups created for the purpose of sharing of information & resources and online teaching. Out of 125 questionnaires, 114 questionnaires were returned/submitted yielding response rate of 91.20%, which is adequate for the purpose of analysis. Based on filled questionnaires, the data from 114 questionnaires were analyzed, tabulated and presented in the form of tables and accordingly conclusions are drawn with using frequency count and simple percentage analysis through MS-Excel.

## 7. Data analysis and interpretation

The data have been presented, compared and analysed by using following tables:

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender**

| Sr. No.      | Gender | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------|--------|------------|------------|
| 1.           | Male   | 61         | 53.50      |
| 2.           | Female | 53         | 46.50      |
| <b>Total</b> |        | <b>114</b> | <b>100</b> |

The data given in Table 1 highlights the gender wise distribution of respondents who were participated in the survey positively. It was noticed that out of total 114 Ph. D. research scholars, 53.50% were male scholars and 46.50% female scholars. The analysis shows that the female students have also entrusted to join the higher education degree programs in agricultural sciences as compared male counterpart.

**Table 2: Knowledge sharing definition**

| Sr. No. | Definition   | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|--|-----------|------------|
| 1.      | Knowledge sharing refers to the dissemination or exchange of explicit or tacit knowledge, ideas, experiences or even skills from one individual to another individual student or group of students (Wei <i>et al.</i> , 2012). | 68        | 59.66      |
| 2.      | Knowledge sharing as a process of exchanging and gaining knowledge through informal and formal channels by using technical instruments (Ali, 2009).  | 33        | 28.94      |
| 3.      | Knowledge sharing refers to individuals propagating the knowledge they have acquired and distributing them within  | 13        | 11.40      |

|              |   |            |            |
|--------------|---|------------|------------|
|              | organizations (Ryu <i>et al.</i> , 2003). |            |            |
| <b>Total</b> |   | <b>114</b> | <b>100</b> |

Table 2 highlights the responses about the understanding of knowledge sharing definitions. Knowledge sharing has been defined by many scholars in various ways depending on the context in which it is considered. The researchers have selected three definitions of knowledge sharing, which refers to the dissemination or exchange of explicit or tacit knowledge, ideas, experiences or even skills from one individual to another individual student or group of students, and this definition was preferred by 59.66% of the respondents. On the other hand, definition given by Ali (2009), which explains knowledge sharing as a process in which exchange of knowledge occurred with the help of formal and informal channels was preferred by 28.94% of the respondents. With respect to the 3<sup>rd</sup> definition given by Ryu *et al.* (2003), which is based on acquiring and distributing the knowledge among the individuals, was chosen by 11.40% of the respondents. No participant has suggested any definition from their own side. The analysis shows that majority of the respondents are in the view that knowledge sharing is a subject of exchange of information mutually.

**Table 3: General attitude towards knowledge sharing**

| Sr. No. | Perception/Attitude   | Number of responses (%) (n= 114) |               |               |               |                   |
|---------|---|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
|         |   | Strongly Agree                   | Agree         | No opinion    | Disagree      | Strongly Disagree |
| 1.      | I feel that it is important to share knowledge with other students for the benefit of all             | 31<br>(27.20)                    | 44<br>(38.60) | 07<br>(6.14)  | 20<br>(17.54) | 12<br>(10.52)     |
| 2.      | Students should share knowledge with their peers only when approached                                 | 38<br>(33.34)                    | 40<br>(35.10) | 05<br>(4.38)  | 26<br>(22.80) | 05<br>(4.38)      |
| 3.      | Students should voluntarily share their knowledge with their peers                                    | 18<br>(15.78)                    | 60<br>(52.64) | 10<br>(8.78)  | 19<br>(16.66) | 07<br>(6.14)      |
| 4.      | I feel that “sharing is caring”   | 13<br>(11.40)                    | 58<br>(50.88) | 15<br>(13.16) | 24<br>(21.06) | 04<br>(3.50)      |
| 5.      | It is better to avoid sharing information with peers whenever possible                                | 00<br>(0.00)                     | 03<br>(2.64)  | 22<br>(19.30) | 56<br>(49.12) | 33<br>(28.94)     |
| 6.      | Many students have the mindset that sharing knowledge is a type of plagiarism                         | 02<br>(1.76)                     | 16<br>(14.04) | 18<br>(15.79) | 50<br>(43.85) | 28<br>(24.56)     |
| 7.      | Many students feel that they might be penalized by the lecturer for sharing information and knowledge | 04<br>(3.51)                     | 20<br>(17.54) | 12<br>(10.52) | 57<br>(50.00) | 21<br>(18.43)     |

The data given in Table 3 demonstrated the attitude of the respondents towards knowledge sharing and show their agreement and disagreement. It was found by the researchers that two-third, *i.e.*, 65.80% of the respondents either ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with the opinion that sharing knowledge with peers shall benefit all. On the other hand, “when asked to indicate their opinion on the statement that knowledge should only be shared when approached by peers”, about 66.67% of the respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ to this statement, whereas, 27.18% of the respondents either ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ with this stance. With regard to the statement “students should voluntarily share their knowledge

with their peers”, more than 68% of the respondents were either ‘agreed’ or ‘disagreed’, whereas, about 23% of the respondents either ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement.

So far concerned with the statement ‘sharing is caring’, more than 62% of the respondents either ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’, while majority of the respondents, *i.e.*, 78.06% were against the statement that sharing information with peers should be avoided whenever possible. It is emerged that 68.42% of the respondents were ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement that information and knowledge sharing is a type of plagiarism. Furthermore, researchers noticed the variations in the viewpoints of respondents when respondents were asked to indicate their opinion with the notion that “many students do not share knowledge out of the fear that they might be penalized by their lecturers”.

From the analysis, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents have “positive attitude towards knowledge sharing and were aware of the importance of knowledge sharing in the learning process”. The respondents were also “rejected some misperceptions associated with knowledge sharing which reflected their level of understanding and maturity” as also found in their study by Yuen and Majid (2007).

**Table 4: Preferred sources for study-related tasks**

| Sr. No. | Source*  | Frequency (n= 114) | Percentage |
|---------|--|--------------------|------------|
| 1.      | Use of Internet  | 68                 | 59.65      |
| 2.      | Consult other fellow students                              | 49                 | 42.98      |
| 3.      | Use library resources to get more information on the topic | 46                 | 40.35      |
| 4.      | Consult the course professor/tutor/teacher                 | 37                 | 32.46      |
| 5.      | Consult friends outside the university                     | 22                 | 19.30      |

*\*Multiple choices were permitted*

Table 4 revealed the various sources preferred by the respondents for study related tasks and getting information. It has been found from the study that 59.65% of the respondents were preferred Internet for obtaining study-related information, while 42.98% of the respondents preferred to consult other fellow students to get the needed information. It is also evident from the study that 40.35% of the respondents were prefer to ‘use library resources to get more information on the topic’ of their interest, followed by ‘consulting the course teacher/tutor’ (32.46%) and ‘consulting friends outside the university premises’ (19.30%) respectively. This shows that “students realize the fact that their peers, probably due to common understanding of the task, were one of the most useful sources in obtaining study-related information and knowledge” as also found in their study by Yuen and Majid (2007).

**Table 5: Knowledge sharing in different study-related situations**

| Sr. No. | Situations*  | Frequency (n= 114) | Percentage |
|---------|--|--------------------|------------|
| 1.      | During class/Labs/Group discussions                                  | 72                 | 63.16      |
| 2.      | While working on individual assignments                              | 43                 | 37.72      |
| 3.      | While working on group assignments (within their own group)          | 87                 | 76.32      |
| 4.      | While working on group assignments (with students from other groups) | 51                 | 44.74      |

*\*Multiple choices were permitted*



Table 5 revealed the responses about knowledge sharing in different study-related situations. The respondents were asked to express their opinion on how often they share their knowledge with peers. The data demonstrated in the Table 5 shows that 76.32% of the respondents were sharing knowledge during “working on group assignment”, whereas, 63.16% of the respondents preferred to share knowledge during “class/labs/group discussions”. On the other hand, 44.74% of the respondents were sharing knowledge during “group assignments with students from other groups”, while only 37.72% respondents were like better to share knowledge during “individual assignment”. This trend shows that there may be “two most probable reasons, which impose the hurdles in the path of knowledge sharing among the respondents under study, *i.e.*, ‘intense competition among students to achieve better score’ and ‘lack of depth in relationship’. The results suggest that students need to develop group cohesiveness to improve knowledge sharing potential and team performance” as also found in their study by Yuen and Majid (2007).

**Table 6: Preferred communication channel for knowledge sharing**

| Sr. No. | Communication channel* | Frequency (n= 114) | Percentage |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1.      | Face-to-face           | 93                 | 81.58      |
| 2.      | Online chat            | 86                 | 75.44      |
| 3.      | E-mail                 | 71                 | 62.28      |
| 4.      | Telephone              | 52                 | 45.61      |

*\*Multiple choices were permitted*

The data related to different communication channels preferred for knowledge sharing by the respondents is given in the Table 6 and it was explored by the researchers that face-to-face communication was the most preferred communication channel for sharing knowledge among the respondents (81.58%), while 75.44% of the respondents were preferred to share knowledge through online chat, followed by e-mail (62.28%) and telephone (45.61%) respectively. Considering the facts discussed above, it can be concluded that “the proliferation of other communication channels, which could adequately meet the students’ needs could also be a factor that rendered the decreased use of the telephone. The face-to-face communication was probably preferred because it provides instant feedback, help seek clarifications, and offer non-verbal clues” as also found in their study by Yuen and Majid (2007).

**Table 7: Type of information and knowledge shared**

| Sr. No. | Information and knowledge shared*  | Frequency (n= 114) | Percentage |
|---------|--|--------------------|------------|
| 1.      | By expressing their opinion on study-related matters   | 78                 | 68.42      |
| 2.      | By providing answers to improve understanding of other students  | 69                 | 60.52      |
| 3.      | By sharing URLs of relevant websites   | 82                 | 71.92      |
| 4.      | By providing examination related materials (past year exam questions, exam solutions, study notes, <i>etc.</i> ) | 91                 | 79.82      |
| 5.      | By providing their personal books and lecture notes  | 89                 | 78.07      |
| 6.      | By assisting other students in database search, software use, library use, <i>etc.</i>                           | 38                 | 33.33      |
| 7.      | By sharing research articles and other reference material  | 52                 | 45.61      |

*\*Multiple choices were permitted*

Various types and methods of information and knowledge sharing among the respondents are highlighted in the Table 7. It has been found by the researchers that majority of the respondents (79.82%) were like to share important information and knowledge by providing examination related materials among the peers or fellow students, whereas, 78.07% of the respondents opined that they would like to share information and knowledge by providing their personal books and lecture notes. As demonstrated in the Table 7, it was also found that 71.92% of the respondents would like to share information and knowledge by sharing URLs of relevant websites among the fellow students, whereas, 68.42% of the respondents were in the favour of the statement ‘by expressing their opinion on study-related matters’, followed by ‘providing answers to improve understanding of other students’ (60.52%), ‘by sharing research articles and other reference material’ (45.61%), and ‘by assisting other students in database search, software use, library use, *etc.*’ (33.33%) respectively.

The analysis shows that majority of the respondents were preferred to share books, class notes, URLs of important websites and other study related materials among the fellow students.

**Table 8: Barriers of knowledge sharing**

| Sr. No. | Barrier*   | Frequency (n= 114) | Percentage |
|---------|--|--------------------|------------|
| 1.      | Lack of depth in relationship                          | 69                 | 60.52      |
| 2.      | Afraid that other would perform better                 | 98                 | 85.96      |
| 3.      | People only share with those who share with them       | 87                 | 76.32      |
| 4.      | Do not want to be perceived as a ‘show-off’            | 63                 | 55.26      |
| 5.      | Afraid to provide the wrong information                | 59                 | 51.75      |
| 6.      | Lack of knowledge sharing culture                      | 50                 | 43.86      |
| 7.      | Lack of appreciation of knowledge sharing              | 82                 | 71.93      |
| 8.      | Shy to provide own opinions                            | 46                 | 40.35      |
| 9.      | Lack of time   | 38                 | 33.33      |
| 10.     | Do not know what to share                              | 35                 | 30.70      |
| 11.     | Poor communication skills, especially English language | 75                 | 65.78      |

*\*Multiple choices were permitted*

Considering the various aspects of information and knowledge sharing, the respondents have identified the various barriers to their knowledge sharing as depicted in the Table 8. It was found from the study that ‘afraid that other would perform better’ is the major factor that inhibits knowledge sharing activity for a majority (85.96%) of the respondents, whereas, ‘people only share with those who share with them’ was the barrier for 76.32% of the respondents. On the other hand, ‘lack of appreciation of knowledge sharing’ was the major factor during knowledge sharing activity for 71.93% respondents, while ‘lack of depth in relationship’ was the major barrier for 60.52% of the respondents. It was also explored by the researchers that 55.26% of the respondents marked ‘do not want to be perceived as a show-off’ as a factor due to which they are unable to share their knowledge with peers, followed by ‘afraid to provide the wrong information’ (51.75%), ‘lack of knowledge sharing culture’ (43.86%), ‘shy to provide own opinions’ (40.35%), ‘lack of time’ (33.33%), and ‘do not know what to share’ (30.70%) respectively. As far as concerned with language skills, two-

third (65.78%) of the respondents was accepted that a poor communication skill, especially English language skills is the major barrier of knowledge sharing. Based on the analysis, it can be said that knowledge sharing practices could be improved if the above identified barriers are removed.

**Table 9: Knowledge sharing motivators**

| Sr. No. | Motivator*                      | Frequency (n= 114) | Percentage |
|---------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1.      | To learn from each other        | 83                 | 72.80      |
| 2.      | To help others                  | 74                 | 64.92      |
| 3.      | As an exchange or feedback      | 60                 | 52.64      |
| 4.      | Self-satisfaction               | 48                 | 42.10      |
| 5.      | To obtain reward or recognition | 70                 | 61.40      |
| 6.      | To cultivate image of expertise | 85                 | 74.56      |
| 7.      | Build trust relationship        | 64                 | 56.14      |

*\*Multiple choices were permitted*

The data given in the Table 9 elaborate the various knowledge sharing motivators for respondents while sharing information and knowledge with their peers as identified by the researchers during the study. The researchers found that the ‘cultivating image of expertise or recognition’ was the main motivator for 74.56% of the respondents while sharing the knowledge among the peers, whereas, ‘to learn from each other’ was the main motivator for 72.80% respondents. On the other hand, ‘to help others’ was the main motivator for 64.92% of the respondents, while ‘to obtain reward or recognition’ (61.40%), ‘build trust relationship with peers’ (56.14%), ‘as an exchange of feedback from peers’ (52.64%), and ‘self-satisfaction’ (42.10%) were the other motivators for the respondents for sharing knowledge among the peers or fellow students. The analysis shows that we can develop knowledge sharing culture by “placing less emphasis on grades and by reducing unnecessary completion in the learning environment”.

## **8. Findings and discussion**

The major findings of the present study are:

- The findings of this study shows that about 60% of the respondents understand knowledge sharing as an exchange of explicit or tacit knowledge, ideas, experiences or even skills from one individual to another individual students or group of students.
- About 66% of the respondents were in the opinion that sharing knowledge with peers shall benefit all.
- Majority of the respondents possessed a positive attitude towards knowledge sharing and were aware of its importance in their learning process.
- About 59.65% of the respondents were preferred Internet for obtaining study-related information.
- About 43% of the respondents were in the view that peers are the most useful sources in obtaining study-related information and knowledge, and this may be due to common understanding of the task between the peers.
- Majority of the respondents frequently shared their knowledge during class/lab and group assignment (within their own group); however, the respondents hindered

themselves from sharing their knowledge, while they work on group assignment (with students from other group) and individual assignments.

- The face-to-face interaction for sharing knowledge among the respondents was the most preferred communication channel for majority of the respondents (81.58%).
- Majority of the respondents were preferred to share important information and knowledge by providing books, class notes, URLs of important websites and other study and examination related materials among the fellow students.
- It is found from the study that ‘afraid that other would perform better’, ‘people only share with those who share with them’, ‘lack of appreciation of knowledge sharing’, and ‘poor English language skill’ are the major barriers of knowledge sharing among the research scholars.
- The ‘cultivating image of expertise or recognition’ and ‘to learn from each other’ were the main motivators for majority of the respondents while sharing the knowledge among the peers or fellow students.

## **9. Suggestions**

Based on the findings, some of the suggestions can be opined as given below:

It was found from the study that two most probable reasons, which impose the hurdles in the path of knowledge sharing among the respondents, are (i) ‘intense competition among the students to achieve better scores’, and (ii) ‘lack of depth in relationship’. Therefore, it can be suggested that students/ research scholars “need to develop group cohesiveness to improve knowledge sharing potential and team performance. Furthermore, to overcome inhibitors of knowledge sharing, academic institutions should make efforts to foster cordial relationship among students through providing sufficient interaction opportunities through organizing informal social events” as well as there must be a stratagem for researcher as an outcome of their knowledge sharing. Based on the respondents’ opinion, knowledge sharing culture must be nurture in academic institutions and “it could be achieved through placing less emphasis on grades and by reducing unnecessary competition in the learning environment. It can also be suggested that more group-based assignments, tutorials, lab sessions, and projects could reduce competition to some extent and encourage knowledge sharing”.

## **10. Conclusion and implication**

The results of this study have contributed in many ways in knowledge sharing. The present study is an effort to bridge the gap on the lack of research in examining knowledge sharing idiosyncrasies of research scholars of agricultural universities of India with special reference to Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University (CCS HAU), Hisar, India. The study explores the behavioural aspects of knowledge sharing patterns among the agricultural research scholars, which have not investigated earlier. In this research study, Yuen and Majid’s (2007) instrument was used to investigate the knowledge sharing behaviour among the research scholars. The findings of the study illustrate that research scholars have positive attitude towards information and knowledge sharing. It is also noticed from the study that the respondents covered under study valued their peers or fellow students as an important source of knowledge and exhibit a positive attitude towards them as knowledge sharing. However, ‘afraid that other would perform better’, ‘people only share with those who share with them’, ‘lack of appreciation of knowledge sharing’, and ‘poor English language skill’ are some of

the major factors that inhibited knowledge sharing among the research scholars. To overcome these barriers, the researchers suggested that academic institutions should foster cordial relationship and nurture knowledge sharing culture among the research scholars. So far concerned with practical implications, the research scholars after completion of their studies in agricultural sciences, certainly join various ventures, academic institutions especially universities, NGOs, and Govt. service, where the positive attitude towards information and knowledge sharing can enhance their careers options and recognition.

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