



A Case Study on Factors Influencing Knowledge Sharing Among Employees in Royal Malaysian Police (RMP), Selangor Contingent Headquarters, Malaysia

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Abstract. Knowledge Sharing (KS) is an activity in which knowledge consists of information, skills or expertise possessed by an individual is shared among colleagues in the organization. As the organization is involved with a large number of employees that come from different backgrounds, it is very important for the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) to standardize or to implement KS activities within the organization. With respect to this, a study was conducted to examine the relationships between KS and daily activities in RMP through five main factors: organizational culture, communication, management support, trust, and technology. A survey was conducted randomly among 265 respondents from RMP employees at Selangor Contingent Headquarters. Data analysis was performed to examine the correlation of the factors influencing KS. Results revealed that all of the five factors influencing KS were found to be significantly associated with daily activities in RMP Selangor Contingent Headquarters.

Keywords. Factor Influencing; Knowledge Sharing (KS); Employees; Royal Malaysian Police (RMP)

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1. Introduction

Knowledge Sharing (KS) is an activity in which knowledge consists of information, skills or expertise possessed by an individual is shared among colleagues in the organization. However, the concept of KS has its own challenges because some employees tend to resist sharing their knowledge with the rest of the organization thus creating a barrier that is known as knowledge hoarding. This is a major hurdle that must be overcome by the management of an organization in order to achieve their goal of KS. Knowledge can be shared at different levels in an organization, therefore individuals must be reassured that they will receive some type of incentive for what they have created [1]. However, individuals are most commonly rewarded for what they know, not what they share. KS is a tool that can be used to promote evidence-based practice, decision making and also to promote exchange and dialogue among employees in an organization.

One of the reasons for the challenges is that KS often occurs within and among diverse disciplines whose members may not communicate and share their expertise and their promising practices [2]. As the organization involved large numbers of employees with different backgrounds, it requires more time for the RMP to standardize or implement KS activities within the organization. Besides, this action required synchronized planning and implementation among the management and employees. The Clear definition also needs to be explained in order to avoid duplication and better awareness among employees is needed in implementing KS successfully in the organization. Furthermore, the issue of retaining the employee also becomes a critical issue as it is believed that all employees possessed their own capacity and skills which are beneficial to the organization. It also evolves around the issue of knowledge lost and retention. The need of finding a replacement for the trained employees who had left has become one of the challenges in sustaining the performance of an organization. Hence, some measures were implemented within the organizations to overcome the employees' turnover or brain drain issue.

The objective of this research was to examine the relationships between factors influencing KS and daily activities among employees in RMP Selangor Contingent Headquarters. The study focuses on five main factors: *organizational culture, communication, management support, trust, and technology*.

2. Theoretical Backgrounds

2.1 Definition of Knowledge

Knowledge is one of the most important assets for an organization to create value and hence, sustainable competitive advantage. Knowledge can be defined as information combined with experience, context, interpretation, and reflection [3]. In addition, knowledge is also a resource for value creation in any organizations. Knowledge is an intangible resource, and it combines with other firm resources (e.g. financial and physical) to create competencies [4]. Knowledge

resources are often classified as either tacit (implicit) or codified (explicit). Tacit knowledge is the knowledge in an individual's head [5]. Codified knowledge is knowledge that is transferable in formal, systematic language, e.g. via reports and databases [6]. Tacit and codified knowledge are two sides to the same coin, in the sense that you need one to use the other.

2.2 Knowledge Sharing

KS is a people to people process to exchange knowledge [7]. For an organization, it is very important to have employees, who are willing to share knowledge and are motivated to do so. Furthermore, KS is the main element in an organization, without it a company could not achieve their goals and competitiveness [8]. For instance, an employee could improve his/her ability by using ideals and experiences from co-workers and his/her use of these ideas would not affect values of these ideas and experiences of these co-workers. In addition, KS as a process of identifying existing knowledge in order to transfer and apply this knowledge to solve common problems in an organization: or a process of creating new knowledge by combining existing knowledge [9] looks on KS as an ongoing process in an organization within other activities and he claims that a sharing process should not be considered as a separate process in the company [9].

2.3 Factors Influencing KS in the Organization

Based on previous studies, different theory and various determinants have been studied and identified represent the significant factors of knowledge sharing in organizations. For this particular research, only five factors or determinants were studied in understanding the factors influencing KS in RMP organization. The factors are organizational culture, communication, management support, trust, and technology [10–12].

3. Research Method

This study opted a cross sectional survey method in order to answer all the conjectures made in the hypotheses given below. The research instruments that were used were a set of questionnaires in English version. All of the survey data were carefully entered and analyzed using SPSS version 22.

3.1 Research Model

The focus of this section is to develop the research model and hypotheses to examine the barriers of KS in RMP organization context. The model [10] derived was from the adoption of prior study. The model used for this study is as illustrated in Figure 1.

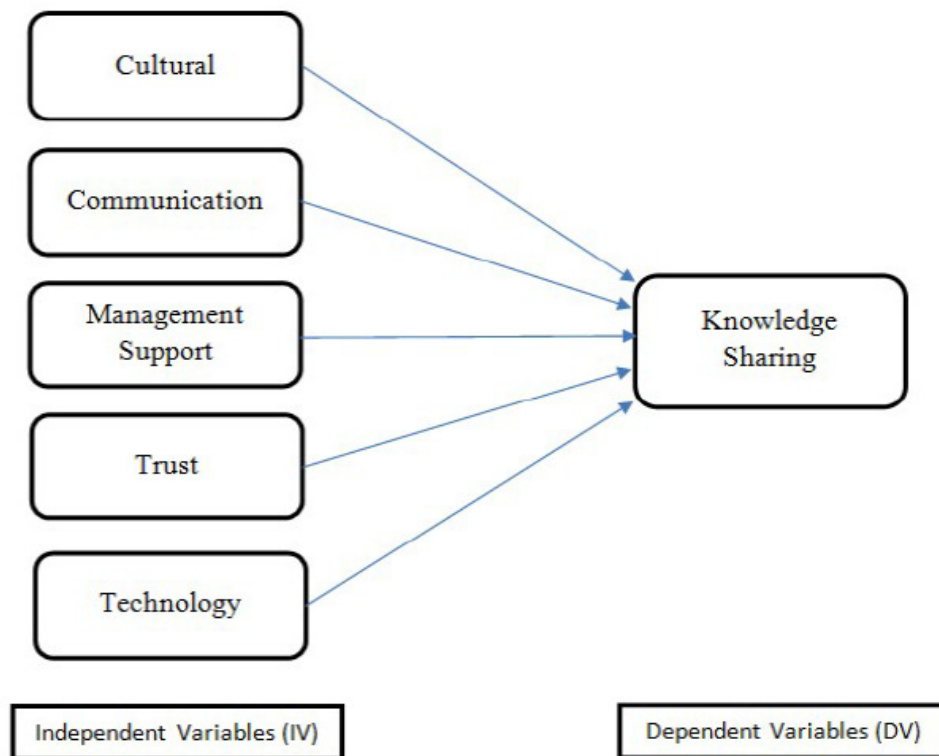


Figure 1. Model of KS in RMP

3.2 Research Hypothesis Development

To examine the research model, the following hypotheses were proposed.

The study generates five hypotheses that will be deliberated in later sub-sections. The hypotheses are as follow:

H₁: There is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and knowledge sharing.

H₂: There is a positive and significant relationship between communication and knowledge sharing.

H₃: There is a positive and significant relationship between management support and knowledge sharing.

H₄: There is a positive and significant relationship between trust and knowledge sharing.

H₅: There is a positive and significant relationship between technology and knowledge sharing.

These research hypotheses were developed based on previous literatures:

3.2.1 Knowledge Sharing (KS)

Knowledge Sharing is described as information that is provided to helps others work together to solve certain problems, develop new ideas and initiatives or implement policies or procedures [13]. KS among employees is important in building intellectual capital of an

organization. KS between teams has become vital for an organization. KS is important in the creation of knowledge and in leveraging knowledge for improved organizational performance [14].

3.2.2 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is described as the shared values, principles, traditions, and ways of doing things that influence the way organizational members act [10]. Culture can widely affect the KS process by facilitating or restricting the flow of knowledge. The success of KS occurred when an organization creates a knowledge sharing culture and environments that support and encourage employees to work together [15].

3.2.3 Communication

Communication is a key element in the process of creating and managing knowledge and in increasing the intrinsic motivation of employees to cooperate. It is an essential requirement for establishing a productive organization-employee relationship [16]. Companies that encourage KS will realize the importance of communication, and try to formally manage their knowledge resources by creating plans, rules and procedures to serve this purpose.

3.2.4 Management Support

Top management support affected both the level and quality of knowledge sharing through influencing employee commitment to KM [17]. Furthermore, management support, for KS has been shown to be positively associated with the employees' perception of a KS culture (e.g., employee trust, willingness of experts to help others) and willingness to share knowledge [18].

3.2.5 Trust

Trust is one of the important elements needed in KS. Without a trusting relationship between employees, participants would not share and transfer knowledge.

Trust in this context is defined as the extent to which an individual believes that to share tacit knowledge in order to achieve the company's goals [19].

3.2.6 Technology

Information Technology (IT) applications focus more on the end-users satisfaction and provide a good social network is key variables affecting knowledge sharing activities [17]. Technology can offer big access to large amounts of data and information. Information Technology (IT) applications focus more on the end-users satisfaction and provide a good social network is key variables affecting KS activities. For this study, there is a need to examine if technological factors influence KS activities among staff in RMP.

Each of the factor influencing KS above is to be examined in terms of their relationships with KS in daily activities in RMP organization. The study findings may provide a deeper insight towards the direction and magnitude of the hypothesized relationships.

3.3 Research Tools

The questionnaire used for this study was adopted from previous research to ensure good validity of results. In addition, several measures were combined with some other reliable items to enhance its internal consistency (or reliability). A total of 110 of returned and completed questionnaires are used as input for the study. All variables were measured using a five-point Likert style scales (ranging from 1 (“*Strongly Disagree*”) to 5 (“*Strongly Agree*”).

4. Results

4.1 Respondents

A total of 265 questionnaires were distributed to employees of the Selangor Contingent Headquarters of RMP. The returned questionnaires were only 135 i.e. after one month of the distribution date. This made up a response rate of 52%. However, there were a total of 25 incomplete questionnaires that were excluded from analysis. The final and complete questionnaires were collected from 110 respondents.

4.2 Demographic Profiles

The majority of respondents were male (80%), age ranged between 18-64 years old. It is higher among the Malay population (90%), as compared to Chinese and Indian (10%). With regard to years of service, the most respondents had worked for 5-10 years (51%) and 10-20 years (21%). Inspector (61%) and Assistant Superintendent (ASP) (21%) constitute the majority of respondents. Other job categories included corporal (6.4%), Lance Corporal, Sergeant and Deputy Superintendent were among the remaining.

4.3 Reliability Test

A reliability coefficient indicates that all questionnaires that were used in the study were reliable. Reliability refers to the extent which a scale produces constant results if repeated measurements are established [20]. The ‘N’ represents the number of points that is data linked to research objectives. The results of Cronbach’s Alpha based on value 1-1.59 (worst), 0.6-0.69 (acceptable), 0.7-0.79 (fair), 0.8-0.89 (good), and 0.9-1.0 (perfect) [21].

The highest reliability coefficient belongs to *Trust* factor i.e. 0.914. Followed by *Technology* (0.912), *Management support* and *Organizational culture* with Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.901$, respectively. Cronbach’s Alpha measure is basically not a statistical test, but merely a measure of internal consistency indicating that questions in each (factor) group are closely related. Overall, the (coefficients are all > 0.80 , suggesting that the items (in each group) have a relatively high internal consistency.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

The most widely used measure of how two variables move together, i.e. relates with each other (or otherwise) is using the correlation method. The correlation coefficient is indicated as (for population) and *are* (for sample); and is computed from the covariance of the two variable. It takes the value of -1 ($\rho \leq 1$). A correlation is a measure of the degree of linear association (magnitude and direction) between two variables where, ρ is closed to zero, indicating that the two variables are unrelated. On the other hand, r value is closer to 1 or -1 , the stronger the relationships of the two variables; in the same direction or opposite direction respectively.

Table 1. Summary of Correlation Analysis

Constructs	ρ	r
Organizational culture	< 0.001	0.750
Communication	< 0.001	0.540
Management support	< 0.001	0.615
Technology	< 0.001	0.607
Trust	< 0.001	0.507

Table 1 shows the Pearson product moment correlation results between the tested variables. All of the relationships tested are all significant at 1% of significance level, with positive direction and are having from moderate to strong relationships. The strongest relationship is shown between *Knowledge sharing* and *Organizational culture*, with $r = 0.750$ (with $p = 0.000$).

4.5 Tests of Hypotheses

The results of the hypotheses test support all of the six posited relationships. Table 2 summarizes the results.

Table 2. Results of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Results
H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and KS	Supported
H2: There is a positive and significant relationship between communication and KS	Supported
H3: There is a positive and significant relationship between management support and KS	Supported
H4: There is a positive and significant relationship between trust and KS	Supported
H5: There is a positive and significant relationship between technology and KS	Supported

4.6 Discussion of the Results

The study hypothesized a positive and significant relationship between employee and KS in RMP. Correlation analysis showed that employees of RMP share knowledge with their colleagues. The majority of RMP employees believe that the frequency and quality of their knowledge

sharing can bring more efforts with the greatest value to the RMP organization. This result also indicates that the majority of RMP employees contribute to knowledge sharing activities in their organization.

Obviously, employees are strongly affected by organizational culture in sharing their knowledge. It seems that if the organization fosters or creates cooperative and approachable culture, the KS efforts will have a tendency to be successful. The success of KS occurred when an organization creates a KS culture and environments that support and encourage employees to work together [15]. It is important for companies to establish a culture that has a high sense of commitment to KS. The results are as well confirmed the relationship between trust and KS among employees in organizations [10, 11]. It was found that the employees at RMP share their knowledge on working skills with the new staff. Besides that, the employees also share their knowledge when attending a training course and staff members are encouraged to contribute their knowledge into the organization database.

The result also supports the study hypothesis of a positive and significant relationship between *Communication* and *KS*. This finding found that knowledge sharing activity may build up employees' reputation in the organization. Sharing knowledge may also stimulate a better cooperation among employees in RMP Department. In addition, the employee likes to communicate with their colleagues in RMP. The finding shows positive and significant relationship between *Management* and *KS* in RMP. Employees seem to be interested in doing actions as per the management's directions and share knowledge. These findings were also supported by the positive response of employees that are happy to share their knowledge with colleagues in RMP. Moreover the managers generally provide most of the necessary assistance and resources to enable employees to share knowledge. The importance of a role as a manager is not only in the control and communication policies and procedures that he/she follows, but more towards to be supportive, encouraging and fostering a good team spirit that would uphold the *KS*. The results are in parallel with the findings where they found a significant relationship between *the Trust* and *KS* among employees in organizations [3, 10]. The results also supported the findings that top management support affected both the level and quality of *KS* in the organization [17, 22].

According to the findings, the study hypothesized a positive and significant relationship between *the Trust* and *KS* in RMP. Hence, the study showed an evidence of the relationship between *these two variables*. Likewise, the employee appeared to feel secure to share knowledge with other colleagues. When employees trust each other, knowledge sharing becomes mutual in nature. One of the respondents suggested that "*Sharing information is the key towards success. Honesty and trust are two very important keys for information exchange. At my organization, we trust each other and share the information*". Trust on *KS* is important because people will trust a person if this person has enough capability and skills to make a true opinion, and he or she does not tell lies [23]. The results were parallel with the results of a few published reports

in the literature. The results confirmed the relationship exists between trust and KS among employees in organizations [10, 11].

The correlation coefficient result showed that a highly significant and positive relationships between *Technology* and *KS* in RMP. As observed from the responses given in the questionnaires distributed, the majority of RMP practice is using electronic storage such as online database and data warehousing to access information and knowledge. Moreover, the employee also exploits other means of communication of knowledge networks such as groupware, intranet, virtual communities and etc. to communicate with colleagues. In addition, the RMP organization uses technology that allows employees to share knowledge with other persons, internal and external, of the organization. The results confirmed the findings that effective KS among academic staff is based more on IT [17, 24].

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper presents a case study looking into the relationships between KS and factors influencing knowledge sharing in daily activities in RMP, i.e. organizational culture, communication, management support, technology and trust. The findings of the study addressed some insights in favor of knowledge sharing activity.

In conclusion, the study found that all of the hypothesized relationships between KS the five factors influencing KS were supported. Surprisingly, all of the constructs proposed in the study framework show from moderate to strong relationships and all are significant at the 1 % level of significance. The findings imply that factors influencing KS are not considered as obstacles to RMP employees in practicing KS activities among themselves. Furthermore, RMP employees have taken steps forward in line with current technologies to adopt in their work endeavor. Fostering new and advanced technologies among management, peers and subordinates may contribute to a faster and better *KS* networking.

This study also creates opportunities for other researchers to conduct other studies on the *KS* activities among employee in RMP organization. Furthermore the findings of the study may be useful as an additional knowledge to the existing literature in this subject area, particularly in Malaysia. Besides that, this study might be useful to help the management of any institution or organization to have better understanding on the factors which may influence *KS* activities in RMP organizations and to acknowledge the barrier of *KS* among employees such as in Homeland Security and Public Order, RMP, Selangor Contingent Headquarters.

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Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Authors' Contributions

All the authors contributed significantly in writing this article. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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