

Assessing Knowledge Sharing Intention Among Academic Staff In Faculty of Business and Management Through Personality Traits

Norhidayah Mohd Rashid¹, Hairunnisa Ma'amor² Nur Idayu Badrolhisam³ and Mohamad Naquiuddin Md Mansor⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Bandar Puncak Alam, 42300, Selangor, Malaysia

norhidayah_rashid@uitm.edu.my¹

hairun2952@uitm.edu.my²

nur_idayu24@uitm.edu.my³

naquiuddin@uitm.edu.my⁴

Received: 5 October 2019

Revised from: 20 October 2019

Accepted: 2 November 2019

Published: 30 December 2019

Abstract

Technology is moving rapidly and educators have to keep up with this fast pace. Due to the pressure to embrace education revolution 4.0 introduced by the government of Malaysia, universities need to integrate technologies in teaching and learning sessions. To get the knowledge required, academicians need to attend training related. However, due to other commitments, knowledge sharing is the best option to gather the knowledge. Knowledge sharing has been accepted as a key dimension of effective knowledge management in an organization. However this situation is contradicting in education industry where every academician focus more on building their own image as the best academicians (Agyemang et al., 2016; Seonghee and Boryung, 2008). The researchers believe the level of willingness to share knowledge vary from one person to another depending on several factors including personality of individual. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify how personality traits influence knowledge sharing attitude and behaviour among academic staff at Faculty of Business and Management, UiTM Selangor, Puncak Alam Campus. 169 sample of respondents will be collected by using convenience sampling technique. This study aims to contributes to the growing literature on the relationships between personality traits and knowledge sharing attitude and behaviour related to teaching and learning technologies (E-learning) among academicians in higher education.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Personality traits, E-Learning, Academician

1. Introduction

Education in the 21st century is all about embracing digital technology. Universities have to be prepared to inculcate technologies into their curriculum and delivery methods to match with this requirement. Since technology is moving rapidly, educators have to keep up with this fast pace. In line with industrial revolution 4.0, the process of teaching and learning have to be changed in which educators should incorporate the latest technologies in their teaching and learning session. To do so, educators should equip themselves with necessary technology based knowledge to ensure their teaching and learning are still relevant especially for Generation Z who are now entering the tertiary education level. One of the initiative that can be taken by educators in

enhancing their knowledge and skills in teaching is by engaging themselves with knowledge sharing approach. This approach provides several advantages including speedy delivery times where knowledge can be learned faster. Furthermore, the learning process can take place in more conducive and comfortable environment since knowledge exchange is in between peers and friends. However, the level of ability and willingness to share knowledge may differ from one person to another depending on several factors including personality of individual.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Personality traits

Personality is the indicators of an individual's performance and behavior (Barrick and Mount, 1991) where it can control an individual's sense of interpretation in their surrounding (Witt et al., 2002). Previous researchers agreed that there are five infamous traits, which consist of extraversion, emotional stability, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Goldberg, 1992) that can influence behavior of people towards knowledge sharing.

2.1.1 Extraversion and Knowledge Sharing

Sociable, outgoing, gregarious, expressive, assertive, warm hearted, talkative, cheerful, energetic and optimistic are the traits that can be classified under extraversion (Lounsbury et al., 2012; McShane and Glinow, 2010; Ma'amor et al., 2016). Generally extraversion dimension is divided into two components i) ambition (initiative, surgency, ambition and impetuous) and ii) sociability (sociable, exhibitionist and expressive) (Hogan, 1986). Characteristics of individuals in this group are more energetic, confident and less conflict with the others. This kind of people will be more dominant in social situations, strive for position (power), impulsive decision maker and risk taker, good social skills especially in the service industry (Rashid et al. 2016). Meanwhile, introvert trait is the opposite behavior where individual in this group have a tendency to be reserved, independent and quite (Costa & McCrae, 1991). Thus, it is predicted that individual who are classified under extrovert personality; have a good social skills and desire to work with others and willingly to share their knowledge. Moreover, they tend to be more emotionally positive and satisfied when work in team as well as share the knowledge with members to make sure that their team remains viable (Teh et al., 2011). Therefore, knowledge sharing is predicted to associate positively with extraversion.

H1a : There is a significant relationship between extraversion and knowledge sharing

2.1.2 Emotional Stability and Knowledge Sharing

Individual with high emotional stability is full of confidence, calmness, peacefulness and receptive (Halim et al., 2011) will be successful in service industry since they are the team players (Rashid et. al. 2016). While, emotionally stability (Yavas and Babakus, 2009) can easily adapt in any environment especially in stressful conditions. Contradicted with neurotic people will usually feel unsatisfied with their work (as cited by Ma'amor et al., 2016) because they are emotionally unstable (Peltokorpi, 2008). Individuals who are categorized under this group

usually feel irritated, depress, not confident with him/herself and others, worried, feeling motionally reactive, anxiety, insecure, anxious, defensive or have compulsive disorder (Foukrod et al., 2010; Halim et al., 2011; Hasso, 2013). They are also associated with bad social skills and trust issues with group members (Azizi et al. 2012). As predicted, individual with low anxiety levels and high self-confidence characteristic are easy to engage in knowledge sharing behaviour (Agyemang et al., 2016) especially in tacit knowledge sharing (Borges, 2013). Surprisingly, individuals who have higher level of neuroticism show positive attitude towards online entertainment knowledge sharing (Teh et al., 2011) where they have the tendency to express their personal content via social media platform (Guadagno et al., 2008).

H1b : There is a significant relationship between emotional stability and knowledge sharing

H1c : There is a significant relationship between neuroticism and knowledge sharing

2.1.3 Agreeableness and Knowledge Sharing

Agreeableness is an important element of social attitude for interpersonal relationship among group members and they can easily blend with others (Yang, et al., 2014). This has positive correlation with teamwork (as cited by ETS, 2012). Few scholars label people with this trait as “friendly compliance” (McShane & Glinow, 2010) kind, cooperative, modest, attentive to others, flexible, forgiving and courteous (as cited by Hasso 2013). Individuals in this group will create a good interpersonal relationship that blends well in-group faster than others (Ma’amor 2016) as well as encourage team cohesiveness and effectiveness (Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2012). Knowledge sharing will flourish in an environment that focused by mutual respect, trust and reciprocal determinism (Dzandu et al. 2014). Previous studies by DeVries et al., (2006) and Matzler et al., (2008) stated that team with high level of agreeableness are likely to share their knowledge with others. It is also predicted that if an individual is high in agreeableness; then knowledge sharing would yield positive result (Matzler et al., 2011; Gupta, 2008). Therefore, it is expected that agreeableness is significantly associate with knowledge sharing activity in an organization.

H1d : There is a significant relationship between emotional stability and knowledge sharing

2.1.4 Conscientiousness and Knowledge Sharing

Lounsbury et al. (2012) identified conscientiousness as a trait that associated with dependable, reliable, trustworthy, followed in house rules, norms and values; hardworking, perseverance, sense of duty, work-oriented, careful, and self-disciplined (Borges, 2013; McShane & Glinow, 2010; Eric, et al., 2005). Individuals in this group focus on achievement, intrinsic motivation and task oriented (Gupta, 2008). They have a tendency to engage in activities that are beyond their roles and responsibility that lead to the willingness of knowledge sharing (Raducanu, 2012; Matzler et. al. 2011). Moreover, employees with high level of conscientiousness are willingly to document their knowledge and share it with others (Matzler et al., 2008). Thus, this trait shows positive association with knowledge sharing.

H1e : There is a significant relationship between conscientiousness and knowledge sharing.

2.1.5 Openness to Experience and Knowledge Sharing

Lounsbury et al. (2012) stated that openness to experience drives employees job performance to satisfaction in works. Creative, smart, trying new things, imaginative, thoughtful, intellectual, and independent (Yang and Hwang, 2014; Hasso, 2013; Ames and Bianchi, 2008) are the characteristics of people in this group who are predicted to have high tendency in knowledge sharing because they display positive attitude towards learning and experiencing new things (Agyemang et al., 2016). Contradicting with people with low openness to experience, they resist to change, less open to new ideas, and conventional (McShane and Glinow, 2010). Hence, this group of people is more sensitive in emotions and love, become self-centred and argumentative (Azizi et al. 2012) for anything that they thought may lead to harm them. Flexible thinking that owned by individual in this trait (openness to experience) will value new ideas and perspective, hence, it becomes a robust predictor for knowledge sharing (Raducanu, 2012). Therefore, openness to experience is highly associated with knowledge sharing in an organization.

H1f : There is a significant relationship between openness to experience and knowledge sharing.

2. FRAMEWORK

In order to conduct this study, personality traits serve as independence variable, which comprise five major constructs consist of Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience. Meanwhile Knowledge Sharing act as the dependent variable of this study. Hence, this study propose the framework that illustrate in Figure 1.0.

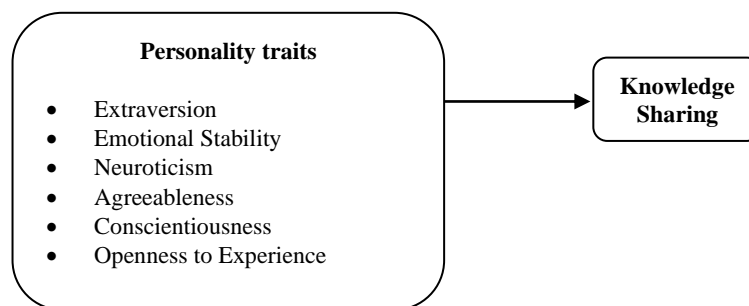


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

4. Conclusions and Implication

The used of e-learning methods are still evolving in UiTM especially among academicians in Faculty of Business and Management Puncak Alam Campus. The ability and efficiency of utilizing these technologies need further attention since researchers believe that not everyone is familiar with online applications that can be used during teaching session. Big five personality traits consider as an infamous personality traits that have been used wisely by previous researchers to predict attitude and behaviors of people. In this study, it becomes an independent variable on how an individual reacts towards knowledge sharing session in higher education. Previous research discussed on how an individual with different characteristics responds with knowledge sharing activities held in an organization. It becomes a guideline in developing the hypothesis of this study as well as predicting the relationship between personality traits and knowledge sharing. In order to prove the association between both variables, regression analysis will be done to support the reliability of previous studies. By using convenience sampling technique, 169 academic staff of UiTM Puncak Alam will become the samples with the aims to contributes to the growing literature on the relationships between personality traits and knowledge sharing attitude and behavior related to technology based teaching and learning (E-learning).

Acknowledgments

This study was supported by DDF Grant (600-IRMI 5/3/DDF (FPP) (007/2019)) from Institute of Research Management and Innovation (IRMI), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia.

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