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## EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

### e-BOOK

# EXTENDED ABSTRACTS e-BOOK

THE 13th INTERNATIONAL  
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# REPLACING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE WITH KNOWLEDGE SHARING INITIATIVES IN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS: A SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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## ABSTRACT

Knowledge management (KM) faces challenges in public organizations due to several factors, such as hierarchical organizational structure, cultural barriers, and resistance to change, which can hinder its effectiveness and suitability. Public sector organizations have cultures that value transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration. In this context, knowledge sharing (KS) replaces knowledge management (KM) since the concept aligns well with the public sector organizations' cultural values, creating a supportive environment where employees feel empowered to contribute and collaborate effectively. Thus, this paper proposes the significance of adopting the concept of knowledge sharing (KS) compared to traditional knowledge management (KM) framed within the context of Social Exchange Theory (SET) in public sector organizations. A quantitative design is utilized through two stages of data collection involving 304 respondents from five selected public sector organizations. The finding indicates that Knowledge Sharing (KS) is a significant mediator of the SET framework for public sector organizations, while Knowledge Management (KM) is not. Understanding how knowledge-sharing exchanges organizational effectiveness and employee engagement is crucial for public organizations seeking to improve their knowledge management strategies.

**Keyword:** Knowledge Management (KM), Knowledge Sharing (KS), Social Exchange Theory (SET)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

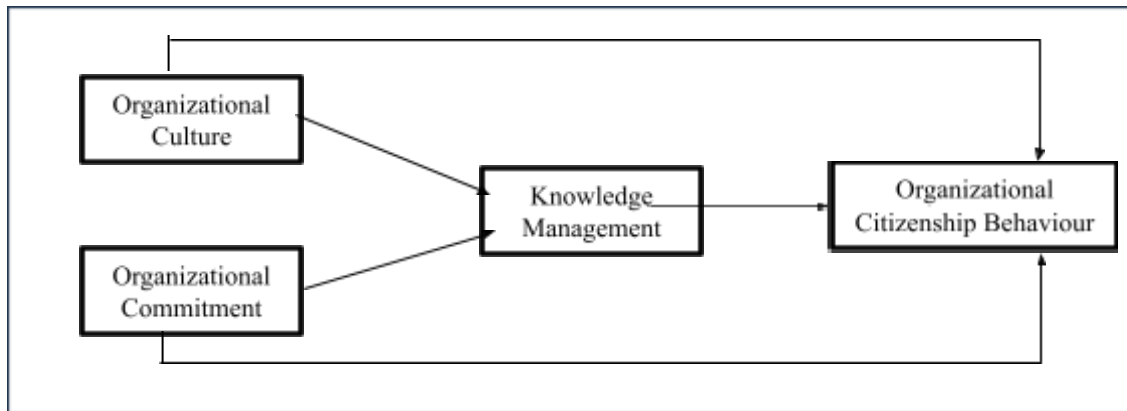
Social Exchange Theory (SET) is a sociological and psychological framework that explains social behavior regarding the exchange of resources between individuals. It posits that human interactions are akin to economic transactions where individuals seek to maximize their rewards and minimize costs (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964). KM is often seen as a crucial component of organizational efficiency and innovation and a systematic process of capturing, distributing, and effectively using organizational knowledge. However, its suitability for Malaysian public sector organizations might be questioned due to several cultural and structural challenges, such as the public organization often having a rigid hierarchical structure that can impede the free flow of information and knowledge sharing across different levels of the organization. This hierarchical setup may create silos and hinder collaboration and knowledge exchange (Abdullah et al., 2005). This paper presents the findings from a pilot study conducted initially using the SET framework; however, due to different cultural contexts held by the public organization, the KM is more significant to be replaced with knowledge sharing.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative study through a stratified random sampling technique is utilized to empirically assess the significance of KM and KS among employees across various departments and different hierarchical levels (grades 19 to 52) in five Malaysian public sector organizations by framing the SET framework. The first stage of data collection aims to measure the significance of KM, while the second stage of data collection aims to measure the significance of KS. Both used a structured questionnaire as the survey instrument. Prior approvals are obtained from the public sector organizations and the respondents to adhere to ethical standards.

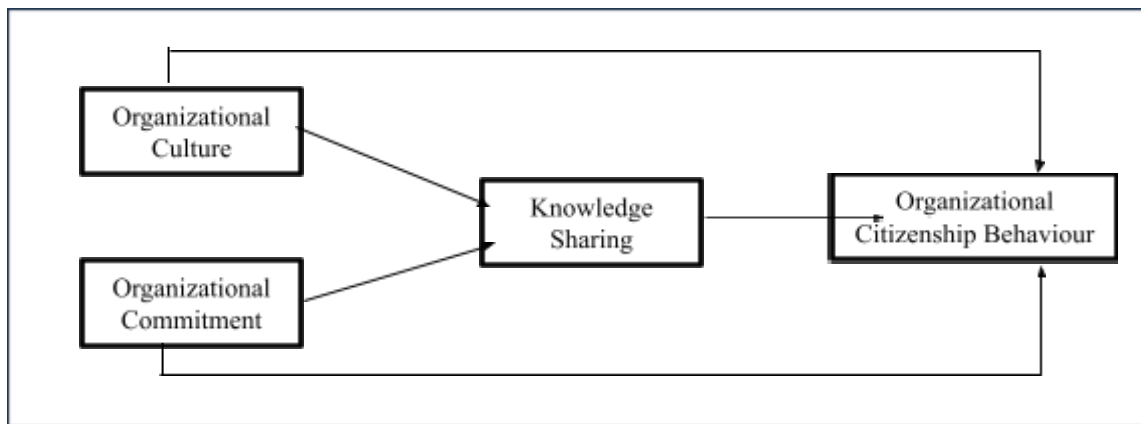
## 3. FINDINGS

The first data collection stage is done among 152 employees of five selected public sector organizations using the research framework in Figure 1. However, based on the statistical analysis called bootstrapping the indirect effect, KM is not a significant mediator of the relationship between organizational culture and organizational citizenship behavior and between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.



**Figure 1** Knowledge Management (KM) as mediator framed by Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Next, a modification is made to the research framework by replacing the KM with KS, considering the cultural and structural challenges of the public sector organizations (Refer to Figure 2). The second stage of data collection is also done among 152 employees of the same selected public sector organizations. Based on the same statistical analysis approach, it is found that KS is a significant mediator between organizational culture and citizenship behavior and between commitment and citizenship behavior.



**Figure 1** Knowledge Sharing (KS) as mediator framed by Social Exchange Theory (SET)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

KS acts as a critical bridge that enhances the dynamics of social exchange in public sector organizations. It amplifies the benefits of mutual support and cooperation, fostering an environment where employees are motivated to contribute to the collective good (Shahnawaz & Halil, 2020). As such, public sector organizations should prioritize strategies that encourage and facilitate KS, thereby leveraging its mediating role to achieve higher organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction.

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