

Knowledge Sharing Attitudes: The Role of Job Satisfaction, Extraversion and Self-Rated Performance

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Abstract: *The main objective of this paper is to find the role of job satisfaction, individual employee personality (extraversion and self rated performance) on two knowledge sharing attitudes, the willingness to share knowledge and the eagerness to share knowledge, since knowledge sharing is vital to out compete in this global business context. This study contributes to the limited research base on knowledge sharing in Bangladesh and the investigation about the factors that affect knowledge sharing in Bangladeshi organizations. Primary data have been used for this study collected through questionnaire survey. The result of the study shows that Satisfied, extrovert and self rater are eager to share information more likely than expect some balance which is aligned with the prior literature. Relevant literatures are also studied about topics related to this research. Recommendation and conclusion form the last part of this paper.*

Keywords: *Knowledge Sharing Attitudes, Job Satisfaction, Extraversion, Self-Rated Performance.*

1 Introduction

Knowledge is a critical organizational resource that provides a sustainable competitive advantage in a competitive and dynamic economy (e.g., Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Foss & Pedersen, 2002; Grant, 1996; Spender & Grant, 1996 cited in Wang and Noe, 2010). Effectively managing this organizational resource is one of the most important challenges for organizations and their managers. To make knowledge become available, it is crucial that individuals and departments are involved in the process of knowledge sharing (O'Dell & Grayson, 1998; Osterloh & Frey, 2000 cited in de Vries, Hooff & Ridder, 2006).

Information or knowledge is power. Those who have information, have the power as the knowledge gives them the expertise power. It is the human nature to want to keep knowledge very often, not to share it, especially in a conservative, inflexible work environment existing in Bangladesh. People in many businesses here have this fear to lose power & it is hard to break this attitude. So, getting people share knowledge may turn out to be one of the key challenges to organization's leaders now. According to Hinds, Patterson, & Pfeffer (2001) organizations must also consider how to transfer expertise and knowledge from experts who have it to novices who need to know. That is, organizations need to emphasize and more effectively exploit knowledge-based resources that already exist within the organization (Damodaran & Olphert, 2000; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Spender & Grant, 1996 cited in Wang and Noe, 2010). Again, as the global organizations are entering the market, and outsourcing of the local companies are increasing, complexity & competition is increasing every day in Bangladesh market.

Here researchers have the intention to introduce knowledge sharing as the “tool” to manage all these changes. This study carried out with the intention, first to know about knowledge sharing attitudes & then to determine the drives those gear such attitudes. For that, researchers have pointed out two knowledge-sharing attitudes: willingness & eagerness related to knowledge sharing attitude & the extent of their dependence on job satisfaction, extraversion, and self-esteem & self-monitoring which is also known as self-rated performance in this report (Robbins, & Coulter, 2008).

The sample of the study covers the employees from diversified organizations of the Dhaka city such as Private Banks, Private University, Consultancy Firm, Advertising media, Telecommunication, and Pharmaceuticals. Among the respondents about 82% (shown in table 02) are male and others are female. About half of the respondents are aged below 30 years and another half of them are older. 58% (table 02) respondents have less than five years of service length.

2 Literature review and hypotheses formation

Organizations in the 21st century facing global risks & competition must be able to learn & respond quickly. So, these organizations will need to share knowledge among them & also have developed the capacity to continuously learn, adapt & change through knowledge sharing attitude. Such organizations’ leaders or managers can effectively challenge conventional wisdom, manage the organizations’ knowledge base & bring the changes.

Knowledge sharing is the fundamental means through which employees can contribute to knowledge application, innovation, and ultimately the competitive advantage of the organization (Jackson, Chuang, Harden, Jiang, & Joseph, 2006 cited in Wang and Noe, 2010). Knowledge sharing between employees and within and across teams allows organizations to exploit and capitalize on knowledge-based resources (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005; Damodaran & Olphert, 2000; Davenport & Prusak, 1998 cited in Wang and Noe, 2010).

Research has shown that knowledge sharing and combination is positively related to reductions in production costs, faster completion of new product development projects, team performance, firm innovation capabilities, and firm performance including sales growth and revenue from new products and services (e.g., Arthur & Huntley, 2005; Collins & Smith, 2006; Cummings, 2004; Hansen, 2002; Lin, 2007d; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009 cited in Wang and Noe, 2010).

Knowledge sharing organization is characterized by the positive attitude toward complexity & change in environment. So; they step ahead in those challenging areas in which others face fear. In fact, these organizations initiate change in the market as they have the flexibility to handle any. They not only confront competitions efficiently, they give others competition. This comes from their confidence which is the function of knowledge as we know. Other characteristics will be these organizations invite innovation irrespective of positions.

Knowledge sharing is the process where individuals mutually exchange their (tacit and explicit) knowledge and jointly create new knowledge (Van den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004 cited in de Vries, Hooff & Ridder, 2006). This definition implies that every knowledge-sharing behavior consists of both bringing (and donating)

knowledge and getting them (or collecting knowledge). According to Ardichvili, Page, and Wentling (2003) knowledge sharing consists of both the supply of new knowledge and the demand for new knowledge.

Here researchers conceptualize knowledge sharing in terms of two knowledge sharing attitudes, i.e.; **eagerness** & **willingness** to share knowledge.

“**Eagerness**” is defined as the extent to which an individual has a strong internal drive to communicate his or her individual intellectual capital to other group members. On the other hand, “**Willingness**” is defined as the extent to which an individual is prepared to grant other group members access to his or her individual intellectual capital to other group members (de Vries, Hooff & Ridder, 2006).

Although both eagerness & willingness are attitude that gear people toward knowledge sharing, there are some important differences. **Eagerness** is somewhat unconditional way of knowledge sharing. Eager people on the other hand, want to spread the word, regardless of any directly tangible benefits they can expect from it. Eager people lean to spreading knowledge much & other than collecting knowledge, they rather expect soft benefits such as elevated reputation & peer recognition in return. **Willingness** is somewhat conditional way of knowledge sharing. For people who are willing to share their knowledge they expect others to contribute as well. Therefore, people willing to share knowledge seek to attain a balance between giving and collecting knowledge (de Vries, Hooff & Ridder, 2006).

Many different factors influence the degree & way in which people share their knowledge. A lot of researchers have identified a number of different variables influencing knowledge sharing, such as **technologies** and **tools** (Hlupic, Pouloudi, & Rzevski, 2002), **motivations**, **organizational climate**, and **communication climate** (Ardichvili, Page, & Wentling, 2003; Bock & Kim, 2002; Hall, 2001; Hinds & Pfeffer, 2003; Inkpen & Tsang, 2005; Moffett, McAdam & Parkinson, 2003; Reagans & McEvily, 2003; Van den Hooff & de Ridder, 2004), **management support**, **coworkers support** (Cabrera et al., 2006), **rewards** and **incentives** (Yao, Kam, & Chan, 2007; Hansen, Nohria, & Tierney, 1999; Liebowitz, 2003; Nelson, Sabatier, & Nelson, 2006), **Individual personality** (Bindu Gupta, 2008; The, Yong, Chong & Yew, 2011)

From other researches, literatures and references, researcher felt preferred to simply cover two issues in this article. They are: a) **Job satisfaction**; and b) **individual personality**.

2.1 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to how people feel about their job, or aspect of their job, such as pay, supervision, and coworkers (Spectors, 2003). People derive motivation to share knowledge from job-related attributes. In other words, it's not only the relationships employees have with their coworkers that determine their willingness or eagerness to contribute to the common good but also the extent to which they are satisfied with their daily work-and feel that they are performing well in that work. Pascoe, Ali, and Warne (2002), for instance, describe how different dimensions of job satisfaction influence one's motivation to perform as well as one's willingness to share corporate knowledge. Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) posit that job satisfaction results in positive effects on employee attitudes, motivation, and behavior. In other words, as people are more satisfied with their work, their motivation to contribute to the common interest of the context in which they

perform their work (donate knowledge) increases as well as their interest in what others within that context do (collect knowledge) (De Vries, Hooff and Ridder, 2006). Also, in line with Pascoe et al.'s argument, when they believe they are performing well, they are also more willing and eager to both donate (showing how well they perform) and collect (helping them to perform well) knowledge.

H₁: There is a stronger relationship between eagerness to share knowledge and job satisfaction than that between willingness to share knowledge and job satisfaction.

H_{1a}: Job satisfaction is positively related to both an individual's willingness and eagerness to share knowledge.

2.2 Individual personality attributes

Personality is the sum total of ways in which an individual reacts and interacts with others. Personality is a unique combination of emotional, thought, and behavioral patterns that affect how a person reacts & interacts with others. It is most often described in terms of measurable traits that a person exhibits (Stephen p. Robbins, 2011). There are hundreds of measurable personality traits. Over the years researchers have attempted to focus specifically on which traits could be used to describe personality. Of these the "Big Five model" is the most popular & evident these days (Robbins, & Coulter, 2008). In recent years research has shown that five basic personality dimensions underlie all others & encompass most of the significant variation in human personality. The five traits are:

- 1) **Extraversion:** The degree to which someone is sociable, talkative & assertive.
 - 2) **Agreeableness:** The degree to which someone is good-natured, cooperative, and trusting.
 - 3) **Conscientiousness:** The degree to which someone is responsible, dependable, persistent, and achievement oriented.
 - 4) **Emotional stability:** The degree to which someone is calm, enthusiastic, and secure or tense, nervous, depressed, and insecure.
 - 5) **Openness to experience:** The degree to which someone is imaginative, artistically sensitive, intellectual.
- In addition to this Big Five model, researchers have included five traits have been found to be powerful predictors of behavior in organization (Robbins, & Coulter, 2008)

- 1) **Locus of control:** The degree to which people believe they control their own fate.
- 2) **Machiavellianism:** The degree to which people are pragmatic, maintain emotional distance and believe that ends justify means.
- 3) **Self-esteem:** An individual's degree of like or dislike for himself or herself.
- 4) **Self-monitoring:** An individual's ability to adjust his or her behavior to external situational factors.
- 5) **Risk taking propensity:** It measures how long it takes & how many information managers need to take a decision.

In case of knowledge sharing, although discussion on agreeableness, openness to experience, self-monitoring are very worthwhile, but considering limitation of this work, researchers have taken only extraversion, self-esteem & self-monitoring which is also known as self-rated performance in this report (Robbins, & Coulter, 2008).

Individual who score high on extraversion is expected to correlate to positive attitudes toward knowledge sharing since they should be more likely to possess the need to occupy a central position in their work environment so they can satisfy their ambitious and domineering tendencies (Bonzionelos, 2004). Now, it is quite logical that extrovert people will want to share knowledge more than the opposites. For self-esteem, we can say that high SEs are much confident & are prone to share knowledge. And, not surprisingly, high SEs are also been found to be related to job-satisfaction. A number of studies confirm that high SEs or high self-rated performance lead to more satisfaction with jobs & such professionals are willing or eager to share knowledge. Specially, high self-monitors occupy higher positions in organizations, thus get the chances to impart their expertise knowledge (Robbins, & Coulter, 2008). Knowledge sharing does; however, appear to be contingent on individuals' confidence of sharing useful knowledge with others. Several studies have shown that individuals who are more confident in their ability to share useful knowledge are more likely to express intentions to share knowledge and report higher levels of engagement in knowledge sharing (e.g., Cabrera et al., 2006; Lin, 2007c,d cited in Wang and Noe, 2010). That how researcher assume the following hypotheses:

H₂: There is a stronger relationship between extraversion and eagerness to share knowledge than that between extraversion and willingness to share knowledge.

H_{2a}: The degree of extraversion is positively related to both an individual's eagerness and willingness to share knowledge.

H₃: There is a stronger relationship between self-rated performance and willingness to share knowledge than that between self-rated performance and eagerness to share knowledge.

H_{3a}: Self-rated performance is positively related to both an individual's willingness and eagerness to share knowledge.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research design

Both qualitative and quantitative researches are done in this study. Secondary sources with rich literature help to find out the importance of knowledge sharing which is strongly related to employees' personality as well as job satisfaction and many other soft issues. Likert scale is used to collect data, reliability is tested as well. Factor analysis is used finding the factors since those are unobservable. Fisher's Z transformation is used to test the significance and all data are processed using SPSS.

3.2 Population

Adults aged over 18 and working at an organization where employees are not isolated individuals.

3.3 Sampling Technique

The sample is selected on a non probability basis, that is, convenient sampling, from professionals of available workplaces. Due to unavailability of the possible sampling frame the survey is conducted on approximately 168 professionals working at diversified organizations of Dhaka city which includes

- a) Private Banks,
- b) Private University,
- c) Consultancy Firm,
- d) Advertising media,
- e) Telecommunication, and
- f) Pharmaceuticals.

3.4 Data

The study is conducted by survey method through collecting primary data. Data is collected through questionnaire method. There are 46 attitudinal statements regarding job related cognitions in the questionnaire suggested by De Vries, Van Den Hooff & De Ridder in their article. The questionnaire contains as many positive statements as negative statements.

3.5 Assumptions

Before the analysis part, the study requires some assumptions keeping in mind about scope & limitation of work. They are listed below:

1. Participants are going to answer the questions honestly and precisely.
2. Participants take part in the social dynamics in the organization freely.
3. Participants are not under influence or maintaining any secrecy.
4. Participants are unable to guess the research goals and direct their answers for or against it.
5. Professionals considered are first-line to mid-level managers.
6. All variables are normally distributed.

4 Findings and Analysis

4.1 Variables Extraction (Factor Analysis)

All variables are measured using 5-point (*strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*) Likert-type scales. There are two knowledge sharing attitudes of the participants- the willingness and eagerness to share knowledge. The questionnaire consists of 8 eagerness items and 9 willingness items. These items are submitted to a principal component analysis with varimax rotation (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) >0.5). The result showed 2 factors with eigenvalue >2 and explaining 32.879% of the variance. These two factors corresponded with the distinction between willingness and eagerness. Based on content and loading, 8 items are selected for willingness and 8 for the eagerness scale. All of the final items measuring eagerness mentioned either “my (area of) expertise,” “my subject,” or similar terms; all of the final willingness items are concerned with the group, its common interest, commitment, or reciprocity. The eagerness scale has reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of 0.727. The willingness scale has a comparable reliability of 0.646. Two examples of eagerness items are “I want to convince others of the importance of ‘my subject’” and “I feel appreciated when I know a lot about my area of expertise”. Two examples of willingness items are “Knowledge sharing can disrupt the collaboration

between colleagues” (reverse-coded) and “Sharing knowledge is not in our common interest” (reverse-coded) (De Vries, Van Den Hooff& De Ridder, 2006). The two scales are correlated 0.062 ($P > 0.01$) with each other.

The extraversion scale consisted of the adjectives articulate, talkative, and extroverted versus the reverse-coded adjectives silent, shy, introverted, and reserved (De Vries, Van Den Hooff& De Ridder, 2006). In a principal component analysis ($KMO > 0.5$), a factor with eigenvalue > 2 explaining 19.99% of the variance is extracted. The factor clearly replicated extraversion. The reliability of the 4-item extraversion scale is 0.646.

The job satisfaction and self-rated performance scales are derived from earlier studies (de Vries, Roe, & Taillieu, 2002; Roe, Zinovieva, Dienes, & Ten Horn, 2000; Taillieu, 1987). The job satisfaction scale in this study consists of 6 items ($KMO > 0.5$) and is derived from 8-item version. The scale pertains to the degree of job satisfaction derived from the amount of variation, responsibility, autonomy, etc. in one’s work (de Vries et al., 2002; Taillieu, 1987) and has a reliability of 0.663 in this study. The self-rated performance scale consists of 6 task related items. An example of a task-performance item is “Everyone knows that I perform better than others around me do”. The reliability of the scale is 0.579. In this study, job satisfaction and self-rated performance are correlated 0.207 ($P < .01$).

Table 01: Descriptives, Correlations, and Reliabilities (on Diagonal) of variables (N = 168)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender (Male = 0, Female = 1)								
2. Age	-0.113							
3. Duration of work experience	-0.070	0.930**						
4. Knowledge-sharing attitude: Eagerness	-0.103	0.239**	0.243**	0.727				
5. Knowledge-sharing attitude: Willingness	-0.093	-0.074	-0.128	0.062	0.646			
6. Job satisfaction	-0.075	0.316**	0.318**	0.331**	0.009	0.663		
7. Self-rated performance	-0.103	0.074	0.023	0.425**	0.000	0.207**	0.579	
8. Extraversion	-0.050	0.263**	0.251**	0.271**	0.023	0.650**	0.366**	0.646
Number of items	1	1	1	8	8	6	6	4
Mean	0.18	31.82	6.3177	4.2225	4.0379	3.6399	3.8044	3.7440
Standard Deviation	0.389	7.700	7.1916	0.5990	0.6501	0.7573	0.6659	0.8664

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data

Among the respondents about 82% (shown in table 02) are male and others are female. About half of the respondents are aged below 30 years and another half of them are older. 58% (table 02) respondents have less than five years of service length.

About 74% (table 03) respondents in the survey are very much eager to share knowledge than others. But approximately 36% of all want some knowledge sharing balance. 64% consider themselves as highly satisfied employees whereas 51% are not confident about their performance. Around 55% are regarded as introvert, reluctant to expose him or herself.

Table 02: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to gender, age and year of experience.

	Gender		Age (years)		Experience (years)	
	Male	Female	< 30	≥ 30	< 5	≥ 5
Frequency	137	31	82	86	97	71
Percentage	81.5	18.5	48.8	51.2	57.7	42.3

Source: Primary Data

Table 03: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to knowledge sharing attitudes, job satisfaction and extraversion.

	Eagerness to share knowledge		Willingness to share knowledge		Job satisfaction		Self-rated performance		Extraversion	
	Not eager to share knowledge	Highly eager to share knowledge	Not willing to share knowledge	Highly willing to share knowledge	Low job satisfaction	High job satisfaction	Low performance	High performance	Not extrovert	Highly extrovert
Frequency	44	124	61	107	107	61	86	82	93	75
Percentage	26.2	73.8	36.3	63.7	63.7	36.3	51.2	48.8	55.4	44.6

Source: Primary Data

5 Findings of Hypotheses

Eagerness to share knowledge is significantly related to job satisfaction ($r = 0.331$, hypothesis 1a) so is with extraversion ($r = 0.271$, hypothesis 2a) and self rated performance ($r = 0.425$, hypothesis 3a) whether willingness to share knowledge is insignificantly related to job satisfaction (0.009 , hypothesis 1a), extraversion ($r = 0.023$, hypothesis 2a) and self rated performance ($r = 0.00$, hypothesis 3a).

It is expected that the relationship between eagerness to share knowledge and job satisfaction ($r = 0.331$) to be stronger than the relation between willingness to share knowledge and job satisfaction ($r = 0.009$; Hypothesis 1). This hypothesis is tested by converting both correlations to z scores using Fisher's r-to-z transformation. Subsequently, these correlations are compared using the method suggested by Meng, Rosenthal, and Rubin (1992). The analysis revealed that the correlations are significantly different from each other ($z = 3.0941$; $\alpha = 5\%$). Consequently, we conclude that people who have job satisfaction are more likely to eager to share knowledge than to willing to share.

The relationship between eagerness to share knowledge and extraversion ($r = 0.271$) is expected to be stronger than that between willingness to share knowledge and extraversion ($r = 0.023$). In this study it is established and significant ($z = 2.37$ at 5% level of significance) according to the hypothesis 2. Therefore, it can be said that the extrovert people are more enthusiastic to spread what they gather without thinking or expecting the reverse. On the contrary, the relationship between self-rated performance and willingness to share knowledge ($r = 0$) is not stronger than that between self rated performance and eagerness to share knowledge ($r = 0.425$) which was found significant in prior literature. The hypothesis (H_3) is insignificant ($z = - 4.15$ at 5% level of significance).

6 Conclusion

The data is collected from individuals working at diversified organizations in the Dhaka city which includes private universities, commercial banks, telecommunication companies, consulting company etc. by survey method. The questionnaire consists of 46 attitudinal questions relating job constructed according to De Vries, Van Den Hooff& De Ridder suggesting in their paper. During data collection people were seem to be very careful about their responses given so that nothing goes against them though confidentiality is ensured.

Demographic data like gender and age are studied to show their effect on the concerned variables. People like to talk about their success stories as they are getting older ($r = 0.239$, $p < 0.01$) and more experienced ($r = 0.243$, $p < 0.01$) and those who perceived themselves as good performer are inclined to talk and share their inner knowledge (0.425 , $p < 0.01$) and are more satisfied with their job and performance ($r = 0.207$, $p < 0.01$). Job satisfaction, good performance sometimes make people extrovert and talkative ($r = 0.650$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.366$, $p < 0.01$) and hence become enthusiastic and motivated to spread what they achieve and how they achieve ($r = 0.271$, $p < 0.01$).

Respondents in the sample responded in such a manner that they don't want balance in getting and giving inner resources and don't bother about what they receive in response which is reflected in the results that show there is no significant relationship between willingness to share knowledge and job satisfaction or self-rated performance or extraversion. This may be because people are confident about themselves and have less confidence on others understanding. They may be reluctant to be burdened with information or may hesitate to ask for something new that is not known to them believing a request for sharing would imply they are inadequate or less qualified.

Satisfied, extrovert and self-rater are found to be eager to share information more likely than expected some balance which is aligned with the prior literature. Although job satisfaction may affect both willingness and eagerness to an equal degree because job satisfaction includes both satisfaction with the task and satisfaction with peers, job performance may inspire greater eagerness than willingness to share knowledge. First of all, people who perform better because they possess valuable information and skills are more likely to be in a position to share knowledge (Borgatti & Cross, 2003). Additionally, a high self-esteem associated with job performance may stimulate people to readily and uninvited (i.e., eagerness) share their knowledge to show their mastery of the subject matter, irrespective of whether a reciprocal exchange will result from this (i.e., willingness) (De Vries, Van Den Hooff & De Ridder, 2006).

This study covers only those employees who are working in urban non-government organizations. A further scope of the study is to include sub-urban or rural or government service holders to find the knowledge sharing attitude amongst themselves. Many other personality traits like agreeableness and others are to be covered to see the effect on knowledge sharing attitude. Moreover, number of individuals in the sample can be extended. During the research, researchers have limitations in studies regarding these issues in Bangladesh perspectives.

7 Recommendations

Lots of intense & thorough future research in this area can be done with more time & large sample size not less than 400. Participants should be sampled based on the demographic-design of Bangladesh. Also; some group-level or team-oriented research can be done on this knowledge sharing behavior in workplaces. One of the key challenges to organization's leaders now a day is to motivate employees to share knowledge with others. It is clear from the above analysis that people who are satisfied with their job are eager to share knowledge, so leaders should try to increase employees' job satisfaction to inspire them to share knowledge regardless of any direct tangible benefits in exchange of it. It's the high time that knowledge sharing attributes should be a big concern for organizations operating in Bangladesh & researchers have dedicated their work on knowledge sharing to those organizations who are looking to win this ever-increasing complex market & reach the summit.

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