The Empirical Investigation of Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behavior

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

This research was intended to investigate the connection between Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behavior. The relationship between independent and dependent variables was calculated by the Pearson correlation and simple regression analysis. The data was randomly collected through a self-administered questionnaire from 129 staff working in private sector universities. This was a cross-sectional analysis and the findings showed that Knowledge Hiding negatively affect the in-role behavior of employees (r = 41.6, \( \beta = -0.645 \), t = 9.51, p < 0.005). The results of this study suggested that universities need to focus on the Knowledge Hiding Behavior of employees in order to achieve their objectives and improve quality.

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Recommended citation: Khan, A.A., Tufail, M., and Bilal, H. (2020). The Empirical Investigation of Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behavior. Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies, 6(2), 577-585

1. Introduction

Knowledge can be obtained and disseminated in many ways but in general, knowledge is the information, skills and experience an individual have with in organisation (Serban & Luan, 2002), which is considered the most valuable resource by an organization for gaining and sustaining competitive advantages (Bock, Zmud, Kim, & Lee, 2005) and innovation (Xie, Fang, Zeng, & Huo, 2016). These advantages can be achieved through sharing of knowledge, which is the transfer of information and expertise, sharing suggestions and ideas with each other within organisation (Bartol & Srivastava, 2002). Hence, The knowledge-sharing behavioural theories express that every organisation should encourage knowledge sharing and its spread among their employees in order to empower individual employees to take precise decisions for long term sustainability of their organisation (Dong, Bartol, Zhang, & Li, 2017; Kim & Park, 2017). Thus, in organisations much attention has been given to why and when people share their knowledge, while little attention has been paid to why and when individuals hide their
knowledge (Peng, 2013). Knowledge Hiding is the withholding of knowledge and concealing of information (Connelly, Zweig, Webster, & Trougakos, 2012), which becomes a key risk to the achievements of an individual and organisation goals (Černe, Nerstad, Dysvik, & Škerlavaj, 2014).

The term In-role Behaviour was introduced by Katz (1964) and is also known as core-task behaviour or task performance behaviour (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). It is the behaviour required by an employee to perform his/her duty and job (Williams & Anderson, 1991). According to Katz (1964) In-role Behaviour is an important component of employees’ work and usually shown in an employees’ job description which is compensated in the shape of formal salary system of an organisation. In-role or task performance behaviour is mandatory to accomplish a specific job.

Knowledge Hiding is a type of incivility at work and is a worldwide issue (Arshad & Ismail, 2018). Most of the studies conducted on Knowledge Hiding at work and performance are US based (Connelly et al., 2012; Gkoulalas-Divanis & Verykios, 2009; Nemeth & Cook, 2005). Therefore, the aim of this research is to empirically assess the effect of Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behaviour.

2. Problem Statement
Previously many studies have been conducted in the area of knowledge sharing especially in academic and professional fields in developed countries (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Endres & Chowdhury, 2019; Škerlavaj, Connelly, Cerne, & Dysvik, 2018). Regardless of the vitality of the phenomenon, there is still a very limited quantitative research available assessing Knowledge Hiding behaviour in an organisation particularly in Sector the Universities. Researchers have suggested that further research is needed to be carried out in the area of Knowledge Hiding in different settings (Connelly & Zweig, 2015; Peng, 2013; Xiao & Cooke, 2018). Worldwide organisations spend huge efforts and expenses on encouraging and developing a knowledge management system to discourage Knowledge Hiding and encourage knowledge transfer (Bock et al., 2005; Wang & Noe, 2010), but still many employees within organisations avoid to share their knowledge and try to conceal knowledge from co-workers and involve themselves in Knowledge Hiding (Connelly & Zweig, 2015; Connelly et al., 2012). As organisations expect their employees to share their knowledge with co-workers (Kuvaas, Buch, & Dysvik, 2012) but still some employees try to hide their knowledge (Connelly et al., 2012) which adversely affect interpersonal relations and creativity (Černe et al., 2014). Due to these harmful effects of Knowledge Hiding, researchers need to further explore employees involved in Knowledge Hiding (Škerlavaj et al., 2018) and hence to fill such a gap, this study will be conducted to further explore the Knowledge Hiding phenomenon amongst the administrative employees working in the private sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

3. Research Purpose
After a detailed study of previous literature, it was found that most of the work on Knowledge Hiding and employees’ work behavior has been conducted in the developed countries; therefore, there is a gap to fulfill by conducting a study on this phenomenon in the developing countries like Pakistan. The main purpose of this research will be to investigate the main aspects of Knowledge Hiding and employees’ work behavior that is in role behavior; will be followed by determining the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

4. Research Objectives
The objectives of the study in hand are to analyse the Knowledge Hiding behaviour impact on the In-role Behaviour of staff working in the private sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

5. Literature
Knowledge refers to the ideas, information, values, observations and expertise relevant to a specific task or job performed by employees within an organisation (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Bartol & Srivastava,
Hiding is concealing or covering something from sharing. So, Knowledge Hiding (KH) is an individual’s or group’s deliberate attempt to conceal or withhold information which is requested by another person or group (Černe et al., 2014; Connelly et al., 2012). Knowledge Hiding by peers, managers and subordinates represents a major threat to not only an individual’s but also organisation’s performance (Peng, 2013). It strictly bars innovation within an organisation due to which the growth, competitiveness and employees’ creativity are damaged in both short and long run (Baer, 2012; Janssen, Krol, Schielen, Hoekstra, & de Kok, 2010).

Knowledge Hiding is considered the absence of knowledge sharing (Connelly et al., 2012). Mainly three strategies are used by employees to hide their knowledge from their peers, co-workers and managers. The first one is playing dumb starter in which the employee hides his/her knowledge by pretending that he/ she is ignorant of the desired knowledge. The second is the Evasive Knowledge Hiding strategy, where an employee provides intentionally incorrect information or makes a false promise for providing complete information in future. The third is rationalised Knowledge Hiding strategy, where a hider provides rationalised justification such as confidentiality of information.

Regardless of the importance of Knowledge Hiding phenomenon, still a very narrow empirical research is available and hence Knowledge Hiding has been recognised as an area for conducting further research (Černe et al., 2014; Connelly & Zweig, 2015; Connelly et al., 2012). Moreover, further research is needed in order to understand the dynamics of Knowledge Hiding in different organisational settings (Connelly et al., 2012). In the light of this, it is vital to investigate the Knowledge Hiding phenomenon in relationship to various organisational factors so as to effectively analyse the Knowledge Hiding behaviour of employees within an organisation.

The In-role Behaviour is the behaviour associated with formal job description such as tasks, duties and responsibilities (Becker & Kernan, 2003; Williams & Anderson, 1991). In-role Behaviour output is important to any job and is characterised as those officially required outcomes and behaviours which directly serve the goals of the organisation (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994). In-role Behaviour is reflected in the particular work outcomes and deliverables as well as their quality and quantity (Koopmans et al., 2011).

Existing research suggests that Knowledge Hiding evokes mistrust amongst the targets of Knowledge Hiding and that Knowledge Hiding reciprocates the same behaviour towards the perpetrators (Demirkasimoglu, 2016; Singh, 2019). In literature, Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behaviour performance can be seen from the perspective of Social Exchange Theory. According to exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and norm reciprocity (Whatley, Webster, Smith, & Rhodes, 1999) exchange is a voluntary response of an employee that is driven by the desired benefits and usually arises from the interaction of two parties. The reciprocity norm states that employees repay in kind what another had performed. It means that employees will respond favourably to each other by returning benefits for benefits, responding with either indifference or hostility (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Gouldner, 1960). This means that when employees feel that they are being treated in a good way then they will also respond in the same way with a good treatment. In the same way, when it is felt that they are not treated positively then they will also reciprocate the same. Therefore, on the basis of this we hypothesise that:

**Hypothesis:** There is a negative relationship between Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behavior

**6. Research Methodology**

A deductive approach will be used to investigate the problem statement being developed in this proposal. A deductive approach is a procedure by which hypothesis or hypotheses are developed on the basis of prevailing theory and framing a research strategy to examine the hypothesis (Wilson, 2014). Deductive approach is the most useful model to test the hypotheses of the research study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).
7. Measures
The following adapted scales (Five Point Likert Scale) were used for gathering data collection from respondents.
   a) Knowledge Hiding was assessed by Connelly et al. (2012)
   b) In-role Behaviour construct was examined through scale originated by Goodman and Svyantek (1999)

8. Research Strategy
This research is a cross sectional study and a quantitative data was collected through survey techniques. A survey technique is the most suitable technique for collecting data from a wide range of correspondence (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2018; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). A quantitative approach seeks to establish, confirm or validate association between variables and to extract generalisations which contribute to theory (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). The purpose of the quantitative research is to add to the understanding of Knowledge Hiding phenomenon among the staff specifically by enquiring the relationship between Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behaviour.

9. Data Collection
For this study the unused and fresh data was collected through primary sources while to check whether the primary research is correct and is according to the desired results of the variables, a secondary source of information is also used.

Population and Sampling
The target population of this study was the administrative staff working at different level of organisation hierarchy that is from junior to senior level at the private sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Random sampling techniques were applied. In random sampling process each individual has an equal probability of being selected, which reduces the chances of biasness in data analysis (Moore, McCabe, Duckworth, & Sclove, 2003).

10. Data Analysis
The Demographic information consisting of gender, marital status, experience and qualification wise statistics of the respondents are portrayed in the following Table 1.

11. Conclusion and Recommendations
In the light of the findings of the current study gender difference in attitude towards mathematics is declining in grade nine students in Pakistan. But still there is need to explore gender differences regarding mathematics classes. Avoidance was an upward question in mathematics education (Ashcraft & Moore, 2009). There is need to find out difference regarding ability level of secondary level students attitude and other factors like giving feedback in mathematics (e.g. Batool, 2020b). Students’ self-efficacy and self-regulation is also a matter of consideration in students’ mathematics achievement (e.g. Batool, 2020a; Batool, Noureen & Ayuob, 2019; Habiba, Batool, & Ayesha, 2020). At upper school and university level this type of survey might be conducted to see a clear picture of gender differences regarding the attitude towards mathematics. Both Girls and Boys (Students) feel mathematics as a boring subject so there is a need to introduce new teaching techniques in mathematics learning. Students problems related to their memory or other health issue should also be explored because these variables may also affect attitudes (Batool, Habiba & Saeed, 2019).

| Table 1: Demographics Information of the Respondents |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Gender  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Male    | 105      | 81.4    | 81.4       | 81.4               |
| Female  | 24       | 18.6    | 18.6       | 100.0              |
Descriptive Data Analysis of Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behavior

The following Table 2 indicates that the highest average is 3.06 of the Knowledge Hiding which is an independent variable in the test model and mean 1.91 refers to the in-role behavior which is the criterion variable in this analysis.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

|          | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean  | Std. Deviation |
|----------|----|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| KH*      | 129| 1.83    | 4.25    | 3.06  | .571           |
| IRB**    | 129| 1.00    | 3.56    | 1.91  | .590           |

*KH: Knowledge Hiding. **IRB: In-role Behaviour

The alpha value of Cronbach’s test was used to assess the reliability of the scales. Both scales were reliable and the findings can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

| Variable Name | Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach’s Alpha |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| KH            | 0.794            | 12               |
| IRB           | 0.886            | 09               |

Hypothesis Testing

Correlation

As shown in the Table 3, there is a strong association (r = -0.645, p = 0.000) between Knowledge Hiding and in-role behavior. It is worth mentioning that the responses to Knowledge Hiding are highly correlated with the in-role behavior.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation analysis

| Mean | Std. Deviation | Correlation IRB |
|------|----------------|-----------------|
| KH   | 3.06           | .572            | -.645           |
| IRB  | 1.91           | .591            | 1               |

To check and know the intensity of the association between Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behaviour, the value of Regression, F and Coefficient are estimated as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Model Summary, F statistics and Coefficients

| Model | R    | R²   | R² Change | F Change | Sig. F Change | Beta | t    | Sig.  |
|-------|------|------|-----------|----------|---------------|------|------|-------|
| 1     | .645 | .416 | .416      | 90.410   | .000          | -.645| 9.51 | .000  |

The regression analysis shows in the table above that Knowledge Hiding is negatively effecting In-role Behavior that explains 41.6 percent (R²=0.416) of variation in In-role Behavior of staff with a Beta value of -.645 having a significant value of 0.000 and t value of -9.51. R square of 41.6 per cent indicates that the hypothesis of the study is true and acknowledged.

In order to further check the normality of the data in the Model distribution, the following histograms have been established which clearly demonstrate that the dependent variables do not contradict the
normality assumption as the figures represent the symmetrical bell curve and therefore fulfill the normality assumption. The below Figure 1 is the histogram of Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behavior.

Figure 1: Regression Standardized Residual of KH and IRB

The principle of linearity applies to the direct (straight line) relation between dependent and independent variable (Tabachnick, Fidell, & Ullman, 2007). Linearity of results was evaluated through distributed plots with uniform residues in both contingent and independent variables. The linear association is formed by a straight line or a curvilinear one, and thus the connection is generally created (Pallant & Manual, 2010). The linearity in a data model is shown in the following P-P plot Figure 2 for information hiding and in-role behavior can be seen in the figures below, which seem to have not compromised the principle of normality found in Histogram. This support linear negative relationships being hypothesize in this study.

Figure: 2 Normal Probability Plot of Regression Standardized Residual of KS and IRB

12. Discussion
The present research study was carried out to address the gap in the relations between Knowledge Hiding Behavior of employees and in-role behavior performance. On the basis of 129 sample of different level of staff, this study empirically explores the Knowledge Hiding and in-role behavior. Our results indicate a negative and significant relationship (r = 41.6, β = -0.645, t = 9.51, p < 0.005). As from the previous findings of Singh (2019) also reveal a negative and significant relationship between Knowledge Hiding and in-role performance (β = -0.208; t = 2.876, p < 0.004).

13. Implications
This research will add to the existing knowledge regarding Knowledge Hiding and its impact on employees’ work behavior in developing countries like Pakistan, specifically the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Most of the previous studies were carried out on Knowledge Hiding and employees’ work behavior in the developed countries (Connelly et al., 2012; Goldberg, 1993; Pan, Zhang, Teo, & Lim, 2018; Parks-Leduc, Feldman, & Bardi, 2015; Peng, 2013; Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003; Škerlavaj et al., 2018) but not as much of attention has been paid to it in developing countries like Pakistan. Study of the relationship between dependent and independent variable is a further extension and contribution to the research model. This research study is also being significant because of its robustness of testing the effect of all the stated variables. Therefore, it is an essential input to the present literature of Knowledge, and employees’ work behavior particularly in the context of Pakistan.

As universities are knowledge-based organizations and knowledge management is one of the backbones of such organizations. The university authorities and the Higher Education Commission are recommended to develop policies that encourage the sharing of knowledge behavior and discourage the hiding of knowledge. Our findings point out that Knowledge Hiding Behavior of employees adversely affects the performance of employees and hence the universities cannot achieve their desired objectives. Therefore, the university management needs to effectively use their employees' potential by focusing and formulating policies to improve the knowledge management system and discouraging Knowledge Hiding Behavior. Such policies will allow them to improve the quality of services and performance.

14. Limitations and Future Research Recommendations
The research was a cross-sectional analysis based on a particular period in time, the differences in relationships over time were neglected, and a longitudinal study would thus be performed over accommodate all variance over time in order to generalize the findings. In addition, a future study to cover other related variables with in-role behavior such as extra role behavior, and counterproductive work behavior in relation to Knowledge Hiding shall also be conducted. In addition, the present study gathered data from staff of private owned universities located within developing countries. It is therefore recommended that a comparative study be conducted on the development of private and public universities

15. Conclusion
This study's main purpose was to examine the connection between Knowledge Hiding and in-role behavior. The study data were randomly collected from 129 respondents and was measured by Pearson Correlation and Simple Regression. The findings of our research and previous studies in developing countries have supported the hypothesis that there is a significant negative relationship between Knowledge Hiding and In-role Behaviour of employees working in private sector universities.

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