

The Relationship between Servant Leadership, Perceived Organizational Climate, and Knowledge Sharing Quality in Public Sector: The Moderating Effect of Enjoyment in Sharing Knowledge

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to explore the moderating effect of enjoyment in sharing knowledge to the association of perceived organizational climate and servant leadership towards knowledge sharing quality in the nature context of public sector. The significant role of servant leadership style is examined to increase the quality of knowledge sharing among public servants. Besides, the relationship between organizational climate and sharing knowledge culture in business performance also re-investigated under the perceived empathy, courage and support from civil servants' perspectives. The survey conducted within Vietnamese public organizations- in which the impact of servant leadership has not raised much concerns from researchers. Overall, these empirical study's results is expected to contribute to implications on knowledge management in the public organizations, enhancing critical roles of servant leadership associated with appraising personal motivation. This aims to enrich more and more culture of sharing knowledge as well as to pave the way for the success of knowledge management strategy within the public context.

1 INTRODUCTION

Previous research showed that organization climate is both enabler and barriers of knowledge sharing (Amayah, 2013). However, compared to private sector, there are not many researches focused on examining the effectiveness of knowledge sharing practices in public sector (Tangaraja et al., 2015). Hence, we also purpose to further investigate the relationship of perceived organizational climate and sharing knowledge quality of co-workers using evidences from an emerging country such as Vietnam-in which civil servants always try to consolidate their vital positions in creating society's welfare and properties (Painter, 2006)

The recent research has shown that the number of related studies about of servant leadership on knowledge sharing is also very limited (Tuan, 2016). Different from the private sector, public sector organization is mainly to serve the people with non-profit goals and the environment of these organization is less favourable for knowledge

sharing compared with private businesses (Willem and Buelens, 2007). Thus, in this research we would like to examine the use of servant leadership in enhancing the values of knowledge sharing as well as contributes to the effectiveness of knowledge management within public sector organizations. From that, the roles of servant leadership should be enhanced to further enrich the knowledge sharing quality, then to pave the way for knowledge management process within public organizations.

In addition, a study has explored that the enjoyment in sharing with other people is one of the most significant motivational determinants which have positive impacts on the effectiveness of knowledge shared among employees in companies. Especially, employees working in public organizations are highly motivated by intrinsic factors rather than outside rewards (Lin, 2007). In this research paper, we address a research approach in examining the essential role of enjoyment in sharing knowledge as a moderator variable in this study. This study partly adopts the same measuring

items used in the research (Yu et al., 2010) for moderator variable that is enjoying sharing knowledge with others.

2 LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.1 Knowledge Sharing in Public Sector

The knowledge sharing in public sector becoming more and more important in these organizations (Amayah, 2013) since public sectors are knowledge-intensive organizations, and they always need an effective knowledge sharing to maximize the benefit of knowledge (Willem and Buelens, 2007). Comparing to the knowledge sharing in private sector, knowledge sharing in public sector was also demonstrated by many similarities and differences in characteristic. Moreover, previous studies found that the organization commitments in public sector are lower and become the bad environment to foster knowledge sharing (Willem and Buelens, 2007). Many other researches also emphasized and shared the same views (Amayah, 2013; Chen and Hsieh, 2015; Mkhize, 2015; Yesil, 2014; Yusof et al., 2012).

2.2 Servant Leadership

A research has shown out the significance of the leadership in which servant leadership is extremely appropriate with the context of public sector organization (Tuan, 2016). Nevertheless, the number of related studies examined the effects of servant leadership on knowledge sharing, particularly examining in these public organizations is still very limited. Therefore, in this research paper we are objectively concentrating on the relationship of servant leadership toward knowledge sharing quality among public servants at the individual level. Thus, we have hypothesis:

H1: Servant leadership has a positive relationship with knowledge sharing quality among employees in Public organizations.

2.3 Perceived Organizational Climate

In this study, we would like to re-confirm how perceived organizational climate associates with knowledge sharing in public sector. Furthermore, we hope the support of these hypotheses could do the premise for the hypotheses of the interaction effects of intrinsic personal motivation to the organizational

climate-knowledge sharing relationship in public environment in the later part. Thus, in this part we suggest 3 hypotheses as follows:

H2a: The perceived organizational support has a positive relationship with knowledge sharing quality in public organizations.

H2b: The perceived organizational empathy has a positive relationship with knowledge sharing quality in public organizations.

H2c: The perceived organizational courage has a positive relationship with knowledge sharing quality in public organization.

2.4 Enjoyment in Sharing Knowledge

The *Enjoyment in sharing knowledge* (called as enjoyment in helping others in some previous researches) is one intrinsic motivated factor which is represented whenever the employees themselves have engaged and volunteering emotions; they feel good to share knowledge at the aim to help their co-workers (Yu et al., 2010).

2.4.1 In the Servant Leadership-knowledge Sharing Quality Relation

We supposed that intrinsic motivation under the perspective of "Enjoyment in sharing knowledge" will reinforce the positive association between Servant leadership and Knowledge sharing quality in the public context. Higher intrinsic factor is motivated, the stronger impacts of Servant leadership on knowledge sharing quality among public employees is. Thus, we have another hypothesis as follows:

H3: Enjoyment in sharing knowledge will have positive moderating effects on the Servant Leadership- Knowledge sharing quality relation.

2.4.2 In the Perceived Organizational Climate-knowledge Sharing Relation

Previous studies already showed that in firms, employee tends to retain their knowledge because he/she may be anxious of losing his/her competitive advantages. And that person only shares knowledge when he/she gets some motivations from obvious perceived benefits (Bock et al., 2005; Lin, 2007). A number of researches also proved that intrinsic motivational factors can nurture the organizational culture of sharing knowledge among employees (Bock et al., 2005; Cabrera and Cabrera, 2005). Furthermore, a working climate of sharing will have

a positive influence on knowledge sharing effectiveness among co-workers (Yang, 2007).

From the perspectives of *Enjoyment in sharing knowledge*, we suggested it played as moderator variable interacting with perceived organizational climate factors in enhancing the quality of knowledge sharing in public organizations. Therefore, we developed three following hypotheses:

H4a: Enjoyment in sharing knowledge will have a positive moderating effect on the relationship between Perceived organizational support and Knowledge sharing quality.

H4b: Enjoyment in sharing knowledge will have a positive moderating effect on the relationship between Perceived organizational empathy and Knowledge sharing quality.

H4c: Enjoyment in sharing knowledge will have a positive moderating effect on the relationship between Perceived organizational courage and Knowledge sharing quality.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Knowledge sharing quality is dependent variable, and also, there are 5 measuring constructs (servant leadership, perceived organizational climate factors including: support, empathy, courage; and enjoyment in sharing knowledge) consisting of total 4 independent variables and 1 moderator variable. In this model, we will examine the servant leadership impacts as it plays moderating role between the relationship of perceived organizational climate and knowledge sharing quality in public sector.

3.1 Measurements

Enjoyment in sharing knowledge: The construct of Enjoyment in sharing knowledge in this research paper was examined base on the items of from study of Yu et al., (2010); Perceived organizational climate: Adapting from research of Brian D. Janz and Pattarawan Prasarnphanich (2003) and Zarraga and Bonache (2003); Servant Leadership: We adapted the questionnaires from research of Mark G. Ehrhart (2004) with 14 measuring items.; Knowledge Sharing: We used the questionnaires from research of Chiu et al., (2006) and Chang et al., (2012), measuring the quality of knowledge sharing by six following measured items.

4 RESEARCH ANALYSIS

4.1 Descriptive Data Analysis

4.1.1 Data Collection

By sharing survey on the Internet among social community as well as sending questionnaire papers directly to every participant, we collected in total of 418 surveyed samples. These participants are workers, employees and official staffs who did and have been working in Vietnamese organizations in different fields in public sectors. For the final survey, 391 samples; the study's respondent rate is relatively high with approximately 93.45% of distributed surveys.

4.1.2 Characteristics of Respondents

It's shown that almost 59.3% of the respondents are female; 49.6% respondents' age range from 31-40 years old. Approximately 47.3% percent of respondents have experience in working in public sector from 3 to 10 years, and more than 32.2% percent of respondents have 10-20 years of experience. The majority of survey responded population are civil servants working in local government (32.7%), followed by officials working in education sectors (17.6%).

4.1.3 Regression Analysis for Model 1: Control Variables – Knowledge Sharing Relation

The model 1 does not explain any significant amount of variance in knowledge sharing, because all criteria are not accepted, F-test insignificant (smaller than 4), $R^2=0.6\%$. The "gender", "age" and "tenure" groups insignificantly influence on dependent variable (due to the insignificant coefficient β). Overall, in this study the effect of control variable on the whole model is not remarkable.

4.1.4 Regression Analysis for Model 2: Servant Leadership-knowledge Sharing Quality Relationship

In model 2, we found that the R^2 equals to 0.182 with the adjusted R^2 is 0.173. This means that the linear regression explains 18.2 % of the variance.

The F-test of model 2 is highly significant ($F=21.439$, with $p<0.001$), which means the regression model explains a significant amount of variance in dependent variable as knowledge

sharing. The independent variable “Servant leadership” statistically significant in predicting knowledge sharing in public organizations with the coefficient $\beta = 0.420^{***}$ (t-value = 9.155, $p < 0.001$).

Durbin-Watson test for auto-correlation test: $d = 1.842$, which is between the two critical values of $1.5 < d < 2.5$. Therefore, we can assume that there is no linear auto-correlation in our multiple regression data. For the multi-collinearity test in our multiple regression model, the VIF ranges from 1.019 to 1.174. It implies that some variables in model might be slightly correlated, however VIF is still smaller than 3, so that it is accepted. From these statistical analyses, we proved that Hypothesis 1 is supported.

4.1.5 Regression Analysis for Model 3: Perceived Organizational Climate-knowledge Sharing Quality Relationship

In model 3, we combined hypothesizes 2a, 2b, 2c together at the aim to test the positive impact of perceived organizational climate on knowledge sharing quality in public organizations. This model consists of multiple independent variables (perceived organizational support, empathy and courage) to predict dependent variable “knowledge sharing quality”.

We also adopt the enter method and found that the model’s overall significance effect of organizational climate on knowledge sharing in public sector is quietly high with F-value = 14.386 (p -value < 0.001) with $R^2 = 18.4\%$ variance explained. There is also no first order linear auto-correlation in multiple regression data of this model ($d = 1.852$). The multi-collinearity test’s result is very low; the VIF just ranges from 1.026 to 1.178.

In term of every independent variable in model 3, it is noted that the perceived organizational support with $\beta = 0.273^{***}$ (t-value = 5.484, $p < 0.001$) and the perceived organizational empathy with $\beta = 0.233^{***}$ (t-value = 4.733, $p < 0.001$) had statistically significant influenced on the quality of knowledge sharing. Meanwhile, the perceived organizational courage had no significantly impacted on knowledge sharing quality due to its $\beta = 0.065$ (t-value is 1.389 smaller than 1.96).

Therefore, the Hypothesizes H2a and H2b are supported, H2c is not supported.

4.1.6 Regression Analysis for Model 4

Based on the results for model 4, it proved that with F-test is relatively high significant (F-value = 19.121,

$p < 0.001$), the multiple regression has explained for 26.6% of variance ($R^2 = 0.259$, adjusted R^2 is 0.245).

Based on the distributed weighted coefficient (β) of each explaining variable, the model 4’s results re-affirmed the results of above hypothesizes that servant leadership, the perceived of organizational support and empathy have positive significance in the relationship with knowledge sharing quality within public sectors. Meanwhile, the perceived organizational courage is statistically insignificant with knowledge sharing quality. The coefficient of servant leadership is the highest one ($\beta = 0.303^{***}$, $p < 0.001$, t-value = 6.244), it also means that compared to perceived organizational climate factors, servant leadership has more positive influence on the quality of knowledge shared among employees in public organizations.

4.2 Regression Analysis of Moderating Hypothesis

4.2.1 Moderation Effect of Enjoyment in Sharing Knowledge on the Relationship between Servant Leadership (SL) and Knowledge Sharing Quality (KSQ)

Hypothesis 3 proposed that Enjoyment in sharing knowledge positively moderates the relationship between servant leadership and knowledge sharing quality in public sector. Firstly, the model has a good fitness because the value of F-test is highly significant equals to 35.03 ($p < 0.001$) with R^2 equals to 21.36 % explained variance. Secondly, in the main effects, the dependent variable had a positive relation to independent variable ($\beta = 0.409$, statistically significant at $p < 0.001$ level) and the moderator variable of intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.163^{***}$). The result is also shown in coefficient for the interaction effect become positively ($\beta = 0.126$, at level of significant is $p < 0.01$).

Hypothesis 3 is supported. It means that the more enjoyment in sharing knowledge is increased, the stronger the positive relationship between servant leadership and knowledge sharing quality become.

4.2.2 Moderation Effect of Enjoyment in Sharing Knowledge on the Relationship between Perceived Organization Support (POS) and Knowledge Sharing Quality (KSQ):

This regression model has a good fitness because the value of the overall significance criteria of F-value is

22.79 ($p < 0.001$) with $R^2 = 15\%$. For the main effects, the knowledge sharing had a positive relation to independent variable ($\beta = 0.317^{***}$) and the moderator variable of intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.163^{***}$). The result also shown in coefficient for the interaction effect become positively ($\beta = 0.088$, at level of significant is $p < 0.01$).

Hypothesis 4a is supported. The more enjoying sharing knowledge is motivated by employees, the stronger the positive relationship between perceived organization support and knowledge sharing quality become.

4.2.3 Moderating Effect of Enjoyment in Sharing Knowledge on the Relationship between Perceived Organization Empathy (POE) and Knowledge Sharing Quality (KSQ)

Hypothesis H4b examines the moderating effect of Enjoyment in sharing knowledge to the association of perceived organizational empathy and the quality of knowledge sharing in public organization. The F-value = 19.64, significant level of 0.001, R^2 accepted with 13.2% of variance explained level. The interaction effect has a significantly positive coefficient $\beta = 0.1$ at p -value < 0.05 . Thus, the hypothesis H4b is also supported.

4.2.4 Moderation Effect of Enjoyment in Sharing Knowledge on the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Courage and Knowledge Sharing Quality

Hypothesis 4c was developed based on the moderating effect of Enjoyment in sharing knowledge to the perceived organizational courage-knowledge sharing quality relation. H4c is not supported. The F-test is satisfied with the tolerance limit with F-value higher than 4, p -value < 0.001 , the R^2 is 4.9% quite low, the slope of interaction effect is not significant ($\beta = 0.027$, p -value > 0.1). Therefore, there is no significant evidence improving the moderator role of Enjoyment in sharing knowledge toward the relationship of perceived organizational courage and knowledge sharing quality in public sectors.

5 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Conclusion and Discussion

The first hypothesis (H1) is supported when explaining the significantly positive influence of Servant leadership on knowledge sharing quality practiced in public sector. This result explored Servant leadership's role in affecting to the quality of sharing knowledge, it is also in accordance with the Vietnamese scholar's perspectives (Luu Trong Tuan, 2016b) in which he approved that Servant leadership ultimately fostered the knowledge sharing in public sector's working environment. In prior researches, Servant leadership does not raise much concerns as regarded as an independent explaining variables for knowledge sharing effectiveness in business areas. Thus, this study's finding also fill in gaps of the literatures of knowledge sharing management (Chen and Hsieh, 2015; de Vries et al., 2006; Lam and Lambermont-Ford, 2010).

Secondly, based on literature reviews, we feel a little confused, thereby we find out different conclusions about the impacts of organizational climate's determinants on knowledge sharing in the context of business (Chen and Huang, 2007) (Lin and Lee, 2006). That is also a reason for us to be more determined in re-investigating organizational climate roles, carried out in public sectors. According to empirical results of hypotheses H2a, H2b, H2c, we found that the perceived organizational support and empathy factors created in organizations tend to have more positive impacts on public servant's sharing knowledge quality and effectiveness. Meanwhile, the perceived organizational courage is not significant enough in predicting knowledge sharing quality among co-workers. We had founded that higher level of enjoyment in sharing knowledge with co-workers which individually servant employee motivated from servant leadership and organizational supporting and empathy behavioural climate will positively strengthen the knowledge sharing activities and initiate the effectiveness of knowledge management system of public organization.

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