Impact of Knowledge Management on Organizational Learning in Telecom Sector of Pakistan

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the emerging trend of Knowledge Management (KM) system on organizational learning in telecommunication industry.KM is the propagating issue of concern for management, it's the outcome of practice and research and it's still emerging as an essential concept. This paper is going to address KM concerns related to human capital and ICT in the telecom sector. It would help the telecom sector to have a good insight at KM discipline in order to prioritize KM practices by facilitating its adoption. Academicians can employ the outcomes of this study to fabricate replica models and it would further aid to inflate the KM realm. This research is significantly the foremost to steadily establish the importance of knowledge management in the Telecommunication industry of Pakistan. It proffers a favorable reserve of salient information to the telecom sector as it is still sheathing far behind in application of Knowledge Management Tools and practices.

Keywords: Organizational Learning , Knowledge management, Telecom Sector, Pakistan.

1. Introduction

In the thriving environment of competitive advantage, business executives have realized the significance of Knowledge Management practices and its implication as KM is the vital solution for accomplishment of an organizational in this millennium. For catering the requirements of the current market scenario, organizations are striving to increase their knowledge base with Intellectual capital (IC) and thus they are bound to learn continuously. Redundant growth in business has urged the telecommunication sector to implement KM systems in order to manage and circulate their organizational knowledge. It will facilitate them to sustain their unique core competencies in the rapid transiting Telecom industry. For this reason knowledge centered principles along with knowledge shared infrastructure in collaboration with learning organizational can only guarantee sustainable and long lasting organizational success. Pakistan telecom infrastructure has not retained its swiftness with the trivial economic growth owing to unproductive learning and knowledge disseminating culture. It is critical for telecommunication industry to proliferate the knowledge in the whole organization though an appropriate environment of perpetual learning and knowledge distribution as it will assist the organization to retain the competitive edge and outshine as a learning organization. This study is theoretically going to reciprocate to the issues related with KM and its affect on organizational learning in the telecom sector in Pakistan.

This paper would be focusing on the research question that what is the importance of knowledge management in an organization and how does it influence organizational learning?

There are following salient objectives of this study;

- The foremost objective of this study is to understand the need of knowledge management in an organization.
- To examine the importance of knowledge management in organizational learning.
- To examine the relationship of organizational learning with knowledge management.
- To explore the relationship of organizational learning and knowledge management in the context of Pakistan.

Organizations attain and retain sustainable competitive edge by deploying valuable resources and resource based view (RBV) also acknowledges it (Barney, 1991; Grant, 1996). Certainly, resource accretion is vital in manipulating the accomplishment of a business. Beside land, entrepreneurship and labor, KM is a fundamental economic resource in a knowledge based economic system. Structure, culture and foundation of an Enterprise harness its KM capabilities (KM processes), and these KM abilities are evident in every operation of the firm. (Grant 1996; Moorman 1995). Knowledge creation, acquisition, assimilation, transfers and reuse are fundamentals of a learning organization (Pillar, 2005). Organizational learning is rated as a forceful process with the strong effect on knowledge, and it varies at different Socialization levels organization wide (Huber, 1991; Crossan, 1999). KM is the propagating issue of concern for management and it's the outcome of practice and research and its still emerging as a fundamental. As a budding issue of concern for the management, knowledge management concerns for research and practice which is still penetrating for a constant amalgam of practical implications and unique competencies (Shu & Chi, 2010). This paper aims to aid to this research by explaining the vital queries about the nature conceptual basis, domain and practical Implications of KM and organizational learning. Although Knowledge Management (KM) has been widely reached and its significant

importance has been narrated by many researchers. However Contextual factors regarding KM as well as organizational differences should also be considered. This study would help the telecom sector to have a good insight at KM discipline in order to prioritize KM practices by facilitating its adoption. Theoretically it would help the Academicians to employ the outcomes of this study to construct models and it would also aid to inflate the KM realm. Contextually it would be the first ever research of its unique kind to be carried out in Pakistan, taking in Pakistan Telecom Industry. Secondly, it would assist them in recognizing and realizing the importance of knowledge management and its implication in an organization.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Knowledge Management

KM has been defined as a set of infrastructures that aim to alter the organizations existing format of knowledge processes and to increase its outcomes (Joseph, 2005). Knowledge not only serves as a fundamental source of competitive advantage but is also regarded as a vital resource of the firm (Gold, Malhotra&Segars 2001). Km capabilities are listed as KM processes for developing knowledge and utilizing it within a firm. Academicians and researchers have widely used the processes of knowledge creation, its transformation along with its utility for knowledge processes (Delong, 1997).Attain, integrate, incorporate, trial (Leonard, 1995),to generate, relocate, collect, collaborate, and utilize (Teece, 1998), to craft, to route (Ivers, 1998). (Cui,2005) narrated that three different processes of knowledge acquiring, knowledge transfer and knowledge application add to constitute knowledge abilities (Gold, Malhotra, & Segars, 2001).

Knowledge management has been studied in the history as the most vital aspect for the execution of organizational performance (Davenport & Prusak, 2000). A Successful organization can leverage knowledge and have effective operational systems with high customer service quality. These organizations can foresee the trends and challenges emerging in the market place (Ajay & Vanda, 2011).

2.2 Organizational Learning (OL)

Organizations endeavor for their survival and to remain competitive, due to the rapid transition of economic instability and vagueness for development and performance Organizational Learning (OL) is deemed as the driving force to achieve managerial achievement (Senge, 1990) (Pilar, 2005). OL is a dormant variable with many dimensions, including supervisory obligation, system's perception, and explicitness with trialing, knowledge relocation and assimilation. OL serves as a source of heterogeneity in organizational culture (Grant, 1996; Lei, 1996).

Learning and Experience curves are used as a measure for learning (Yelle, 1979).Learning curvatures are not full fledge measuring tools. Organizational learning is a multifaceted multi-dimensional build encircling various sub processes (Slater & Narver, 1994).

The tentative experience of English organizations, Garratt (1990) in order to meet the customer's needs and requirements, organizations should make use of knowledge café's .For these organizations should develop the learning abilities of their employees and for this organizational flourished KM processes. Organizations cannot develop the learning abilities without KM (Garratt, 1990; Su, Huang, & Hsieh, 2004). Therefore in the light of above discussion it can be stated that management of knowledge is very important for organizational learning.

2.3 Relationship of Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning

Organizational Learning has been defined as the precedent of Knowledge (WeiLingKe & Kwok Kee, 2006). Km emphasizes on the content of knowledge that is used to acquire, assimilate, transfer and use data whereas OL focuses on the processes (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003). KM has been argued as a process and OL has been linked to it as its ultimate goal. Km initiates help the organization need to embed organizational knowledge into organizational methods so that organization can pursue its goals and can enhance and improve its practices. It can only be accomplished with the effective creation, assimilation and distribution of knowledge (W. R. King, 2009 Acquisition, creation, dissemination and integration of knowledge are the fundamental source to organizational learning (Pilar, 2005).Organizational knowledge is a multidimensional phenomenon that has versatile levels of action ability, moving from different variances of Socialization, moving from single to group and then from group to organizational level and vice versa (Huber, 1991).With all the theory about OL & KM, relationship of both as in KM literature has explained the relation between OL and KM differently at different levels. Some take it as a cause and effect relationship, taking it as a causal factor here as others take KM as an effect generated by OL; still some argue that KM can serve as a cause to OL as well (Shu & Chi, 2010). Researchers are of the opinion that causal arrows are from OL to KM i.e. OL is the antecedent of KM. From the RBV KM leads to OL which states that OL emerges as a reaction to KM (Shu & Chi, 2010).

2.4 Knowledge Management in Telecommunication Industry

In the era of rapid industrialization and technological infrastructure, telecom sector is forced to enunciate and generate new technological functions with the growth of technological progress in order to cater the requirements of new generation (Yusof, 1998). Under the persistent effect of latest and extra complex technological transitions, along with the certainty of global communications deems it compulsory for Pakistan telecom organizations to contribute a positive function in transforming primarily the Pakistani economy towards information and knowledge based economy. Pakistan telecom industry has to imply different strategic measures to come at par with domestic and international Telecom Sector. For this their knowledge uniqueness of attainment, use and transfer should act as a source of competitive advantage (Gorelik, 2002).Due to rapid technological development Telecommunication industry of a developing country has been referred to as the 'Sunset Sector' (Chang, Chew & Huan , 2010). If telecom is analyzed as a business structure then it can be referred as an interaction among intellectual capital, structural capital and human capital (Khalid & Abdulaziz, 2012).

2.5 Organizational Learning Theory

To retain competitive edge in a changing environment, organizations need to swiftly alter their respective objectives according to situation. An organization has to take appropriate measures to transform the ongoing actions by linking these acts with outcomes (Argyris, 1977). Data Acquisition is the first step in the process of learning. These acquisitions can be as the result of experience, experiments, benchmarks and (Senge, 1990). Interpretation is the second step in organizational learning process (Cha & Thatcher, 2008). Organizational learning Process consists of the metrics of creation, identification, integration, modification and diffusion of knowledge which leads to the final action. Action is the third stage of organizational learning process. This is after organization acquires the relevant data, interprets it in the form of significant information and takes necessary action with the help of it (Hahen & Bunyanatarjeh, 2009).Learning is generally established as it depends on what is supposedly learned ,how it occurs important is the context in which learning has occurred (Lane,2001).

3. Conclusion

With the help of the literature discussed it can be narrated that there exists a positive relation between organizational learning and KM tools. In the light of the research conducted, it is apparent that academicians are of the view that knowledge is an integral part of learning and is significantly related to organizational learning (Anantatmula, 2009). With the aid of learning, task implementation and decision making, knowledge management can enhance organizational performance (Orzano, 2007).It can be concluded that knowledge is a phenomenon that can be exploited by the users and can be retrieved to perform different activities in an organization. Knowledge management process adds in to attain, store, reclaim and imply effective knowledge.KM is necessarily compiled from an environment that fosters effective learning in an organization. Therefore KM can act as a transformation mechanism in an organization to create a learning organizational culture. KM act as a tool to improve organizational effectiveness and it can enhance organizational effectiveness by reusing knowledge for decision making process. Pakistan telecom industry has to imply different strategic measures to come at par with domestic and international Telecom Sector. For this their knowledge uniqueness of attainment, use and transfer should act as a source of competitive advantage (Gorelik, 2002).Insinuation of the form of knowledge to be used in an organization depends on its HR and corporate requirements. It is a sign of improvement for an enterprise to introduce morals that emphasize knowledge delving behaviors to assist this infuse the mores of the institute. This study has been conducted in the telecom sector of Pakistan, but some other different organizations have also introduced Knowledge management systems .These all sectors could not be included in this single study due to resource and time constraint. Researchers can further escalate this study on different other sectors to fill in the gap by taking in different other Knowledge management practices and analyzing the impact. Moreover the theoretical input of this study should be used to carry out an empirical analysis as well. It is recommended for the organizations that they should make effective use of Knowledge management for the employees and major focus should be on internal customer as its ultimate advantage will go to organization itself.

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