

# Knowledge Sharing in a Critical Moment of Work: A Driver for Success?

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## ABSTRACT

This article aims at proofing empirically the influence of social interaction in knowledge sharing by focusing on key persons and the way the knowledge-sharing is spread in order to produce some outcome for the organization through individuals within it. The object of this study is employees of Post Offices in Central Java who frequently share information with their co-workers in accomplishing their jobs. The data is acquired from questionnaires distributed to managers and supervisor level of Post office. Based on purposive sampling method, 210 samples are obtained. The results indicate that the five hypotheses built in this research are supported and only one hypothesis is not supported. The result shows that employees with specific, complicated, and challenging objective will be more willing to share their knowledge to other employees, particularly when facing new job and target. Furthermore, the result of the study explains that sharing idea of improvement will encourage more dynamic teamwork and help each other in solving any problems.

## KEYWORDS

Affective Commitment, Career Success, Critical Moment, Goal Setting, Knowledge Sharing, Teamwork Quality

## INTRODUCTION

A good career enjoyment is essential for an individual in creating a career platform for his/her professional life in an organization. Sturges, Conway, Guest, & Liefoghe (2005) elucidated the condition for a mutual partnership between individuals and his/her organizational superordinate is the necessity of commitment and mutual benefit in the form of interdependence between individuals and organization. Career persistence is commonly demanded, for the sake of a continuous professional life instead of possibility for being fired in the middle of career enjoyment.

Someone who has set his/her heart on his/her career and has a clear career goal will be more successful. Career success is conceptualized as extrinsic and intrinsic career successes. The extrinsic career success construction uses objective indicators, and the intrinsic career success is constructed in a subjective manner (Karavardar, 2014). Motivation plays an important role as leverage for someone to

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work harder and to have a successful career. As studied by Locke, Latham, Locke, & Latham (2006), the intention of achieving a goal is the main source of energy for success. This research focuses on the research gap between group awareness on organizational objective and career success. Not many studies pay attention to the relationship between group awareness on organizational objective and career success. Research by (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Kaplan, 2015; Kavoo-linge, 2005) demonstrated the importance of focus on goal setting to improve career success. Unfortunately, it is still not clear what process should be initiated or the way should be taken to transform a goal setting focus to enhance career success.

This study aims to build a conceptual model, anchored by knowledge sharing in critical moment as a mediation for filling up the research gap between self awareness on organizational objective and career success. Adopting the goal setting theory, our conceptual model comprises also the role of affective commitment and its support in driving knowledge-sharing behavior from manager/supervisor and teamwork quality. Individuals tend to have certain standard of work and achievements and strive to achieve these standards using various strategic actions. The notion that individuals will striving for his/her achievement explains why people have strong motivation may succeed; and utilize it to a specific and hard-to-achieve goals will be more successful than those with unclear or easily-attainable goals. Anyone with strong commitment on a job tends to do his/her work creatively for achieving the organization goals (Arogundade, Arogundade & Oladipo, 2014), in particular, an individual with high affective commitment has greater career satisfaction. Knowledge sharing is needed by organizations in introducing intergroup works by encouraging employees to share their knowledge and expertise to each other to deal with complicated tasks at work. Knowledge sharing in critical moment is a way to nurture knowledge exchange for detailing numerous unexpected and hard to solve problems within the organization. Initiating and utilizing the knowledge sharing in critical moment habit is expected to improve teamwork quality and career success.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

### **Knowledge Sharing in Critical Moment and Career Success**

Lending the notion of knowledge management, we introduce the concept of knowledge sharing in the critical moment (KSCM) as a mediation of group awareness on organizational objectives to career success. Knowledge management is the key in increasing competitiveness through creativity, innovation, productivity and reputation which ultimately increases organizational benefits. The essence of knowledge management is an approach on how knowledge in an organization can be generated and utilized by its members to push competitiveness (Ganguly, Mostashari, & Mansouri, 2011). Knowledge sharing is an important dimension of knowledge management. An effective management strategy will affect the process of sharing appropriate knowledge to the organization, especially how the organization is able to motivate employees to continue to share knowledge with fellow employees in order to improve innovation and teamwork (Carvalho, 2017).

In an organization, sharing knowledge among its members is useful for solving complex problems such as problems that come repeatedly and constantly which require immediate improvement, where problem solving is the process of removing barriers to finding solutions (Hou et al., 2014). Critical problems include any complicated problems requiring new ideas to overcome. Those problems are the problems whose solutions are completely unknown/full of uncertainty, or those problems requiring completely new ways to be solved (Furukawa, 2016). Critical problems are uncommon ones and those that conventional ways find hard to solve (Payne, Gallagher, Eck, & Frank, 2013). Critical moment is the important point in work life which is obtained from analyzing the frequently-occurring problems at work such as new job, critical/vulnerable job, jobs with many doubts or uncertainties, revolutionary jobs as well as the targets at work that should be achieved. Knowledge sharing in critical moment serves as a behavior of sharing knowledge with one another in dealing with numerous important problems

which will have some impacts in improving an employee's career success in their organization (Wu, Liao, & Dai, 2015). Based on the literature review and previous study, we propose:

**H1:** Knowledge sharing in critical moment positively influences employee's career success.

### **Affective Commitment and Knowledge Sharing in Critical Moment**

Affective commitment is an important antecedent for enhancing knowledge sharing in a critical moment since affective commitment encourages more extra role behavior such as voluntarily be willing to share knowledge and skill and experiences. An employee with strong affective commitment will continue to work with the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1996), mirrored by having a strong belief and a higher acceptance of the organization's goals and values. This committed employee tends to make most efforts on behalf of the organization and have strong desire to maintain their organizational citizenship in the organization.

The organization could improve this affective commitment by increasing compensation, developing trusts among supervisors and subordinates, creating collegial relationship at work and other activities which may increase their sense of belonging to the organization. There is sufficient support that affective commitment is a critical predictor to see the outcome of an organization including performance and pro-social behavior. Anvari et al. (2014) states that if employees are viewed with high level of commitment, they tend to want to stay in the organization, and they will be more willing to make additional attempts voluntarily and generally more willing to share their knowledge in the organization. Based on the literature review and previous studies, we propose:

**H2:** Affective commitment positively influences knowledge sharing in critical moment.

### **Self Awareness on Organizational Objective in Goal Setting Theory, Affective Commitment and Knowledge Sharing in Critical Moment**

Goal setting theory explains that individuals would feel more challenged by high work standard, and when these individuals could do their job at this high standard, they will get more committed to high and challenging goals (Gómez-Miñambres, 2012). Goal setting is frequently made by individuals, for example when a student sets a certain score target for him to graduate with *cumlaude* predicate, or when someone follows certain diet program with tight requirements to succeed.

In order to reach this difficult target, one should set challenging, specific, measurable goals, attainable, relevant and timely goals. In setting goals, it is therefore necessary to set the goals that one wants from the beginning. The desired goals should be the superordinate ones. In Sholihin, Pike, Mangena, & Li (2011) research, it is found that participation in goals drives individuals to increase their commitment even greater towards those goals. The knowledge owned by individuals is not necessarily something easily accessible. Under some circumstances, one prefers storing up knowledge until a certain motivation factor occurs to influence his/her intention to share his/her knowledge. Various studies explain that the important factors which influence the successful knowledge sharing process in an organization are highly determined by the strong motivation of individuals within the organization for sharing (Allameh, Abedini, Pool, & Kazemi, 2012; Twum-Darko & Harker, 2017). Based on the literature review and previous study, we propose:

**H3:** Self awareness on organizational objective positively influences knowledge sharing in critical moment.

**H4:** Self awareness on organizational objective positively influences affective commitment.

## Teamwork Quality, Knowledge Sharing in Critical Moment and Career Success

Teamwork is a group of individuals working together to coordinate their roles and be responsible for solving problems in the organization. Team work is a recent work trend. In the face of rapidly growing business, modern organization synchronizes their needs by adopting speed and important advices for their success. According to Fapohunda (2013), team work is an important topic in current business climate, where team-based structure stimulates further betterment to productivity, profitability and service quality.

Knowledge sharing between individuals positively contributes to effective collaboration, since knowledge sharing becomes an important part of cooperation in an organization, improves their ability to deal with and be responsible for various problems (Ramim & Lichvar, 2014). Knowledge sharing in a team is highly critical to get things right when so many obstacles are in the way, by improving the inter-team coordination in order for them to give benefits for the organization betterment (Staples & Webster, 2008). Their research results explain the importance for an organization to invest in and focus on knowledge sharing, because they will create an innovation and improve individual performance. Based on the literature review and previous study, we propose:

**H5:** Knowledge sharing in critical moment positively influences teamwork quality.

**H6:** Teamwork quality positively influences career success.

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This research is based on the researcher's effort to build an empirical research model. The measurement of variables and indicators is based on its built concept and construct and through the development of hypotheses in order to test the relations between variables. Prior to the hypothesis testing, the researcher tests the construct validity and reliability. The object in this study is employees of Post Office in Central Java who frequently perform the process of information sharing with their co-workers in completing their jobs. The analysis unit in this research is heads of division, supervisors and managers. These three represent attitude, behavior and high motivation to reach their career commitment.

### Variable Definitions and Measurement

Affective commitment is measured from the tight closeness with the company, exerting all their potentials seriously to realize the company's vision, be persistent to bring the company goals into reality and implement company values to achieve the goals (Anvari et al., 2014). Knowledge sharing in critical moment is measured from the activities of sharing information related to important tasks at work, sharing new ideas to complete the jobs in which many doubts or uncertainty exist, sharing ideas in accomplishing the targets they have to achieve, sharing experiences to perform brand-new jobs more effectively (Furukawa, 2016; Payne et al., 2013). Self awareness on organizational objective is measured by the possession of specific goal orientation, constant participation in achieving challenging goals and the attention to the organization goals (Gómez-Miñambres, 2012; Lunenburg, 2011). Teamwork quality is measured from the dynamic, interdependence, responsive and cohesive teamwork (Kankaw & Wannapiroon, 2015; Liu, Tjosvold, & Wong, 2004). Career Success is measured from financial success, higher level of position in office, faster office promotion, and career satisfaction (Karavardar, 2014).

This research uses ten point scale rating (1-10) to determine the questionnaire responses. The research data which will be collected consists of primary data and secondary data. The primary data is collected using a survey method mostly comprising of questionnaires. Additionally, some companies conduct interviews for respondents' answers. The questionnaire has its content validity and reliability tested, then field trial is performed in order to obtain improved consistency and validity of the research instrument (questionnaire).

## Research Sample

The target population in this research are Post Office employees in Central Java, Indonesia. The primary data in this research is collected using questionnaire. The total respondents under study are 210, namely the managers and supervisors of the Post Office in Central Java, Indonesia. Based on the survey we that have conducted, there are 193 questionnaires that are completed, and the remaining 17 questionnaires failed to fulfill the qualification. These 193 questionnaires are then used in this research. However, when the data is processed, 53 questionnaires are outlier, leading to their drop from the research samples. The total remaining sample in this research is 140 respondents.

## Data Analysis and Measurement Models

The hypothesis testing in this research uses SEM approach. The testing using SEM includes two types of variables, namely observable/manifest variable and latent/non-observable variables. This study aims to analyze the effect of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) consists of two main parts which are measurement model to confirm the indicators of the latent variables and structural model which can represent the causality of two or more variables. Structural model is a model of relationship structure which shapes or explains the causality between the factors (Ferdinand, 2014).

In evaluating the fit of the model, several goodness-of-fit indices use normed fit index (NFI); comparative fit index (CFI); Tucker-Lewis index (TLI); root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) in addition to the  $X^2$  statistics. We further evaluate the measurement properties by performing a confirmatory factor analysis. Each item is set to load only on its respective latent construct, and the latent constructs are allowed to be correlated.

The questions used, cronbach  $\alpha$  score at each construct, loading factor score of each construct should be greater than 0.6 cut off point. From the testing results, it is found that the validity scores of construct is shown in Table 1, meaning that such constructs as group awareness on organizational objective, affective commitment, knowledge sharing in critical moment, teamwork quality and career success based on the predetermined statistical cut off scores are as construct reliability (CR) which is more than 0.7, the variance extract (VE) is more than 0.5, and the loading factor is 0.6 or more.

## RESULTS

The hypothesis testing in this research is aided with the analysis of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) program AMOS. The results from Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis test in the full model can be seen in Figure 1. The full model confirmatory testing shows good results, i.e. it has met the goodness of fit criteria. The model structure is used to describe the research causality models with multilevel relations. The testing results show that the goodness of fit criteria has passed Chi-Square test at 172,179. The probability score is 0.000. The TLI score is 0.949, the GFI score is 0.876, the CFI is 0.957, the RMSEA score is 0.061 and the Cmin/DF is 1.524. It indicates that these scores have suited the predetermined cut-off. However, note that the self awareness relationship on organizational objective and career success is significant regardless.

Table 2 explains that Knowledge sharing in critical moment significantly influences career success at ( $\beta = 0.543$ ,  $CR = 2.752$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Thus, hypothesis 1 is confirmed. Affective commitment influences knowledge sharing in critical moment at ( $\beta = 0.273$ ,  $CR = 2.671$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Hence, hypothesis 2 is confirmed. The results show that self awareness on organizational objective influences knowledge sharing in critical moment ( $\beta = 0.620$ ,  $CR = 0.5035$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), meaning that hypothesis 3 is confirmed. Self awareness on organizational objective influences affective commitment ( $\beta = 0.736$ ,  $CR = 0.6716$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), meaning that hypothesis 4 is confirmed. Knowledge sharing in critical moment has significant influence teamwork quality ( $\beta = 0.844$ ,  $CR = 0.8069$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), meaning that hypothesis 5 is confirmed. And teamwork quality has no significant influence on career success ( $\beta$

Table 1. Scale item for measures

Reflective Scale Items	Standardized Loading Factor	$\alpha$	Composite Reliability	AVE
<b>Knowledge sharing in critical moment</b>				
• Sharing information on important tasks	0.790	0,855	0,863	0,615
• Sharing new ideas to solve confusing and uncertain tasks	0.620			
• Sharing ideas to meet the target finish date	0.790			
• Sharing experiences to synergize on a new task	0.910			
<b>Affective commitment</b>				
• Having a strong feeling of attachment with the company	0.750	0,909	0,910	0,717
• Putting all efforts and maximizing potentials to realize the company's vision	0.900			
• Striving to achieve the goals	0.860			
• Implementing the company values	0.870			
<b>Self awareness on organizational objective</b>				
• Having a specific goal orientation	0.710	0,880	0,870	0,626
• Getting involved or participating in achieving a challenging goal	0.830			
• Striving to realize difficult and complex goals	0.820			
• Being responsible to achieve the goals of the organization	0.800			
<b>Career success</b>				
• Having financial success	0.750	0,890	0,891	0,671
• Having a high position in the office	0.890			
• Getting promotions faster	0.820			
• Having a high career satisfaction	0.810			
<b>Teamwork quality</b>				
• Dynamic teamwork that can face drastic change on a task	0.600	0,826	0,860	0,610
• Solid teamwork that can work together to finish a task	0.870			
• Responsive teamwork when needed	0.750			
• Supportive teamwork on new ideas	0.870			

= 0.064, CR = 0.353,  $p > 0.05$ ), meaning that hypothesis 6 is not supported. These results indicate that the five hypotheses built in this research are supported and only one hypothesis is not significant.

## DISCUSSION

An organization commitment improves the positive synergy in driving productivity at work, increases the support to the organization and drives knowledge sharing to deal with various changes within the organization (Anvari, Mansor, Rahman, Rahman, & Chermahini, 2014). Since knowledge sharing is not compulsory in an organization, an individual's personal motivation is highly important for voluntary and active involvement in knowledge sharing.

Figure 1. The result of the research

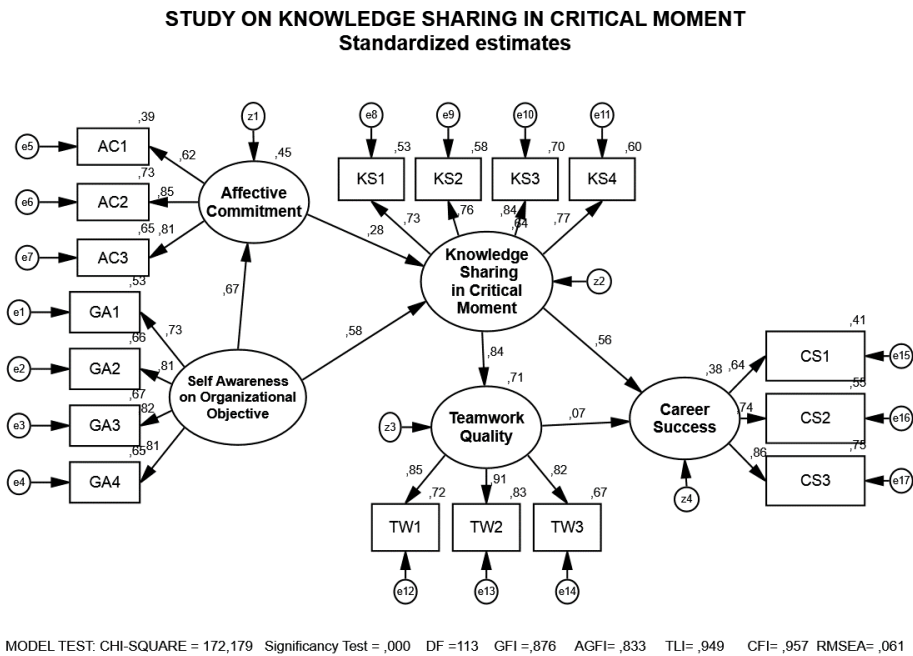


Table 2. Summary of results from the SEM models

	Relationship	Path Coeff.	CR	Prob.	Hypotheses
H1	Knowledge sharing in critical moment → Career Success	0.543	2.752	0.006	Supported
H2	Affective Commitment → Knowledge sharing in critical moment	0.273	2.671	0.008	Supported
H3	Self awareness on organizational objective → Knowledge sharing in critical moment	0.620	5.035	0.000	Supported
H4	Self awareness on organizational objective → Affective Commitment	0.736	6.716	0.000	Supported
H5	Knowledge sharing in critical moment → Teamwork quality	0.844	8.069	0.000	Supported
H6	Teamwork quality → career success	0,064	0,353	0,724	Not Supported

Similar research shows that individuals who set specific, hard-to-attain goals become more motivated to perform improvement, thus it drives them to have better performance by continuously maintaining their performance or improving their current performance (Lunenburg, 2011). Specific and challenging goals are used to evaluate performance with feedback and drives the creation of commitment.

Another similar research conducted by Casimir et al. (2012) shows the influence of affective commitment on knowledge sharing behavior. It finds that employees who treasure their social relations and resources tend to view knowledge as a collectively-owned commodity. Therefore, knowledge sharing behavior occurs as a result of social exchange and mutual relations. This study shows that emotion in knowledge sharing influences behavior in knowledge sharing, serves as the basis of

trust to co-workers which seems to be a catalyst for knowledge sharing. The organization needs to create a conducive work environment to build social capital and to prepare a system which enables knowledge sharing.

The research results confirm Liu et al. (2004) view which suggests that knowledge sharing in a team allows its members to perform their job in a coordinated manner, to be able to deal with competition and to work interdependently with others from the same team by interacting in a way which will benefit both of them. The conclusion of this research confirms the studies of Zhu, Huang, & Contractor (2013) which believe that employees with mutual interests and collective actions will attempt to accomplish difficult projects collectively, by motivating each other to enable members engagement/participation. This motivation to accomplish difficult projects encourages employees to collaborate with their partners with skills which could complement them, and to affiliate with the same entities.

Building knowledge sharing requires altruistic individuals which refer to those who are willing to help others (Maa & Chan, 2014). Altruistic and prosocial behaviors give cohesion which drives knowledge sharing behavior. In addition, sometimes knowledge sharing occurs without any intention to do so in the beginning; it occurs due to intense communication process.

Teamwork quality has no significant influence on career success. This finding confirms the research by Kavanagh & Crosthwaite (2007) which explains that not all works go towards teamwork direction. Many works could even fail when the individuals lack training and rely only on their teams, making these teams functioning ineffectively and producing undesired final results. Zou & Ko (2012) research explains that the incorrect understanding of teamwork with work team has caused the teamwork to be limited merely as work division. The results of evaluation reveal that cooperation in teams causes more conflicts in a job and problems in teamworks.

The conclusion of some studies (Zhou, Guan, Xin, Mak, & Deng, 2016) states that knowledge sharing and intimate work relations have significant contribution to teamwork collaboration, because knowledge sharing becomes an important part of team cooperation in the company. Also, individuals with high locus of control tend to proactively develop their skills to achieve career success by continuously and actively adapting themselves to their career development.

## **MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION**

The results of this research give managerial implication to those managers or middle managers/supervisors in PT Pos in driving for a successful work. The organization should emphasize on the importance of affective commitment by constantly striving to manage their HR on the basis of strong bond between employees and the organization. A strong emotional relation with the organization causes employees to have great willingness to keep developing their organization sincerely, be proud of being part of the organization and keep thinking about the organization's future. The organization needs to build greater bond with their employees through adequate compensation, and to extend the employee engagement in the face of critical moments.

Knowledge sharing in critical moment is a behavior with a long-term focus on the work, where individuals keep growing and developing knowledge sharing in dealing with various problems by sharing knowledge with subordinates, co-workers, and those to whom they should report. Knowledge sharing in complicated works and the effort of dealing with entirely new problems undoubtedly require great energy and specific experiences from the middle managers and supervisors, including attitude and competence maturity at adequate level for the knowledge sharing to generate the right solutions to overcome numerous problems.

In dealing with completely new jobs due to the change in regulations, ideas and experiences from previous jobs could be shared. The organization needs to design certain policies in order for these new ideas and experiences to be shared to finish the job which is full of doubts or uncertainties, and for it to be the atmosphere in the organization, the policies need to be built by flexibly assigning



authorities to each field. It is also necessary for the organization to promote the drive to innovate at work and to keep involving middle managers and supervisors in many of its important decisions. Such antecedent is expected to improve career success with faster career promotion and improved performance allowance.

Growing and developing knowledge sharing in an organization will drive a teamwork which goes shoulder to shoulder in finishing the job and will encourage a dynamic and responsive teamwork. The organization shall keep encouraging manager/middle manager involvement to discuss with managers/supervisors in dealing with important problems for their advices/considerations. The organization should give their best employees the chance to develop their careers and give as wide opportunity as possible to have a career in PT Pos, in order to realize the greater ideal, i.e. continuously supporting PT Pos to be a leader and to reach excellence in their field of expertise.

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