The Relationship Between Knowledge Management (KM) and Organizational Innovation Among Employees of Sport Clubs at Kerman Province

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ABSTRACT

The results achieved showed that creation system has a positive relationship with the KM and has also a positive impact on innovation performance. Knowledge management also plays a mediating role between the creation system and innovation performance. The research method is correlational and the study population consisted of 180 sports clubs at Kerman city and statistical sample was selected as 90 sports club which in the end, 115 questionnaires were identified as suitable statistical analysis. Cronbach's alpha results indicate that internal consistency of knowledge management and organizational innovation questionnaires equals to 0.76 and 0.80, respectively. To descriptively analyze the data, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine relationships. The above analysis was performed in SPSS and in 0.05 significance level. The findings related to employees' gender showed that the frequency of male employees allocates 69 subjects and the frequency female employees allocates 31 subjects. Also, findings related to employees' age showed that frequency of employees aged 25-30 years with frequency of (n = 8), age group of 31-35 years with frequency of 36 subjects and age group of 36-40 years with frequency of 30 subjects (n=30), age group of 41-45 years with frequency of 11 subjects (n=11) and age group of 46-50 years with frequency of 15 subjects (n=11). As a result, with increasing environment search capabilities in an organization, a broad range of knowledge appropriate to the changing environment is provided which could increase the potential for innovation in organizations. The more the ability of an organization to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the environment, the possibility of new ideas in the organization will increase and arising innovation in the organization will increase.

INTRODUCTION

Today's world is the world of changing and management status in our society indicates an imbalance between the increasing complexity of the organizations and the organization's inability to anticipate and cope with changes and their complexity. To deal with environmental threats and using possible opportunities, organizations have to identify their capacities and capabilities, repair weaknesses and enhance the strengths. Management problems are so complex and intertwined that the problem is not easy to diagnose and the human nature of organizations and the complexity of the behavior of employees has doubled these complexities [10]. Today, despite the variability and unpredictability of these changes, what helps organizations, especially developing organizations to increase productivity and contribute to development and progress is the opportunity to compete with other organizations and this is not possible unless by the effects of managers on employees' creativity and innovation and implementation of new ideas and increasing innovation in the organization can be led to improving the quantity and quality of services, reducing costs and preventing waste, reducing bureaucracy, increasing competitiveness, efficiency and productivity, enhancing employees’ motivation and job satisfaction [9]. Today, in different situations, creativity and innovation is a requirement in all scientific fields, art, sports, technological, industrial, cultural, and sociological fields and as can be observed, even in the simplest parts of human cultural achievements is the product of innovation and creativity of thinker and
resourceful individuals that have transferred into its current form over the years by the process of ideas and theories and developing initiative. Innovation is an activity that aims to create, move, change and respond to new ideas. According to their attitudes, innovation is not only the conscious invention of new ideas, but the introduction and application of these ideas are included and the overall goal is to improve organizational performance. Although knowledge itself is a source, the way this knowledge is to be managed and used is effective on the quality of services that can be produced from any source of institution. But before that knowledge management is a new field with its own rules, it exists in this attitude that what is the incentive for change and stimulating innovation. Thus the main aim of knowledge management is to create and organize an environment in which individuals develop their knowledge, share knowledge of others combined with his knowledge and bring it to reality. This use of knowledge in turn will lead to innovation in organizations. That is why knowledge management is often known as the reference source of innovation and is considered as innovation requirements in organizations. Also sports organizations are no exception; organization management, including sports organizations, is one of the main issues that unfortunately little attention is paid to it in Iran. Sport Management in the country have those who have no sufficient expertise in this field. They certainly cannot enhance the state sport to its real position as is worthy to good talented youths of this country without knowledge of various aspects of the courses required. Athletic importance in one hand and considering the state sport on the other makes it necessary access to new ideas and new initiatives to promote and develop all aspects of the sport. National sports development is an important part of economic – social and national development. Due to these factors, understanding the conditions that would encourage organizations, especially sports organizations to create and acquire new knowledge and convert it to functional methods to improve their activities and benefit from new and creative ways to improve their structure and performance is of utmost importance. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the relationship between knowledge management and organizational innovation of sport club employees at Kerman Province and contribute to the advancement of science and sports management by making the way ahead clear and finding the factors influencing innovation in the area of management. Bagherinejad et al. conducted a study entitled knowledge management and its performance in organizations which they finally came to this conclusion that innovation and knowledge management is an important factor to achieve organizational goals and application of knowledge management requires innovation and reform in organizations in order to move towards the innovation and synchronize innovation with knowledge management in each of the steps above which is so effective towards knowledge management in the organization. At all stages of the knowledge management process, including creating and validating knowledge, presentation, dissemination and application of knowledge and culture and creating knowledge can create innovation and coordinate innovation with knowledge management in each of the above steps. Beigari conducted a study entitled effects of knowledge management capabilities on technological innovation process in organization of statistical community of Malek Ashtar University Research and the data were collected from the questionnaire tool. The results of this study show the high effects of knowledge acquisition indicators and application of knowledge on the production of innovative ideas while the high effects of the knowledge conversion was not approved. However, in collection criteria which includes two components of creation and acquisition of knowledge, significant effect of knowledge creation on the production of innovative alone was not confirmed by itself. But in application index that includes three components of storage and retrieval, distribution and sharing and knowledge application, the effect of all three factors were independently verified. Dehghan Najm conducted a research entitled knowledge management and its role in organizational innovation, which finally came to the conclusion that knowledge management is the organization of knowledge i.e. attempts to obtain the required knowledge, sharing information within an organization and emphasis on strengthening the organizational memory in order to improve decision making, enhance productivity and encourage people for innovate in the organization. Innovation should be sought at the heart of knowledge management, for a sustainable competitive advantage is hidden in innovation. Therefore, organizations need to create an atmosphere that open exchange of knowledge and innovation is emphasized so that employees are more willing to share their new knowledge with each other and use it.

Douplasis conducted a study on the role of knowledge management in innovation. The study results showed that innovation has been the mainstay of the organization in a rapidly changing business world today. The nature of the world’s economic growth rate is due to changing innovation. Speed innovation is possible through rapidly growing technology, shorter product life cycles and increasing the rate of new product development. Innovation complexity has also increased with the growth of knowledge available to organizations. Chen et al. carried out a research on knowledge creation and knowledge management, performance and innovation. The results achieved showed that creation system has a positive relationship with the KM and has also a positive impact on innovation performance. Knowledge management also plays a mediating role between the creation system and innovation performance.
Methodology:
The research method is correlational and the study population consisted of 180 sports clubs at Kerman city and statistical sample was selected as 90 sports clubs which in the end, 115 questionnaires were identified as suitable statistical analysis. The instruments used included Lawson KM standard questionnaires (2003), which consists of knowledge creation, knowledge capture, knowledge organization, knowledge storage, knowledge dissemination and knowledge use components and Delfani’s organizational innovation (2010). Cronbach’s alpha results indicate that internal consistency of knowledge management and organizational innovation questionnaires equals to 0.76 and 0.80, respectively. To descriptively analyze the data, Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to determine relationships. The above analysis was performed in SPSS and in 0.05 significance level.

Conclusion:
The findings related to employees’ gender showed that the frequency of male employees allocates 69 subjects and the frequency female employees allocates 31 subjects. Also, findings related to employees’ age showed that frequency of employees aged 25-30 years with frequency of (n = 8), age group of 31-35 years with frequency 36 subjects and age group of 36-40 years with frequency of 30 subjects (n=30), age group of 41-45 years with frequency of 11 subjects (n=11) and age group of 46-50 years with frequency of 15 subjects (n=11).

First Zero Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between knowledge management and organizational innovation.

Second Zero Hypothesis: there is no significant relationship and agents of knowledge management.

According to Table 1-4, there is a significant positive relationship between knowledge management and organizational innovation (05 / 02P, 21/0 = r); in other words, an increase in knowledge management increases also organizational innovation rate.

Second Zero Hypothesis: there is no significant relationship and agents of knowledge management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge management with organizational innovation</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2: Pearson's test results on the relationship between organizational innovation and agents of knowledge management.

Based on the data in Table 4-2, only agents of knowledge creation and knowledge absorption have positive significant relationship with organizational innovation variables among the agents of knowledge management. Also among agents of knowledge management, knowledge creation has a positive significant relationship with knowledge absorption, knowledge creation and knowledge management, knowledge capture, knowledge management, knowledge capture, knowledge accumulation, knowledge organization, knowledge accumulation, knowledge storage and dissemination of knowledge and the dissemination of knowledge by applying knowledge.

Discussion and conclusions:
There is a significant positive relationship between knowledge management and organizational innovation (05 / 02P, 21/0 = r). In other words, an increase in knowledge management causes organizational innovation rate also increases. This result is consistent with the study conducted by Bagheri et al [1], Biglari [2], Dehghan
Najm [5], Doupleisis [13] and Meng et al [16]. The confirmation of this hypothesis by this research may suggest that more emphasis on knowledge management, for development of innovation is very effective. In the present study, confirming the hypothesis also indicates a significant relationship between knowledge management and innovation among employees of sports clubs at Kerman city i.e., an increase in knowledge management leads to an increased in employee’s innovation. Proper utilization of the rapid developments in science and technology requires having up-to-date knowledge. This is one of the tendency of organizations to knowledge management. But, as mentioned, knowledge management alone does not cause the organization achieve the desired goals. This is possible only when the innovation is considered as one of the achievements of KM. Based on research findings, among the agents of knowledge management, only knowledge creation and knowledge absorption are positively related to organizational variables. The research findings indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between knowledge creation and innovation among employees of sports club at Kerman Province. 

(05 / 0 ≥ P, 18/0 = r). This result is consistent with the research results achieved by Bagherinejad [1], Dehghan Najm [5] and Chen et al [11], but it is inconsistent with the one achieved by Biglari [2]. It is possible the reason of this inconsistency relates to the difference in statistical community of Malek Ashtar University. Also in the present study, we examined the effects of other variables such as knowledge acquisition and knowledge creation was a weaker variable than knowledge acquisition that had no effect on innovation. Relationship between knowledge creation and innovation of employees in this study means that with increasing knowledge-creation by sports club employee of Kerman province, employee innovation will be increased that this increase in turn will lead to success in sports clubs. Therefore, sports club officials should use the employee's knowledge and innovations arising from this knowledge in order to improve planning and organizing sporting events and sports championships. Research results showed that there was a significant relationship between the absorption of knowledge and innovation among employee of sports club in Kerman Province, (05 / 0 ≥ P, 19/0 = r). Innovation or the need for change occurs when the organization is not satisfied with the current performance. One way to resolve the dissatisfaction with the status quo is to become familiar with new methods and its capabilities. Having the proper mindset, the organization seeks its environment to recover from the current unfavorable situation. As a result, with increasing environment search capabilities in an organization, a broad range of knowledge appropriate to the changing environment is provided which could increase the potential for innovation in organizations. The more the ability of an organization to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the environment, the possibility of new ideas in the organization will increase and arising innovation in the organization will increase.

REFERENCES
