



Tacit to Tacit Knowledge Sharing using ICT In Higher Education

Prof. Ms. Ulka Toro, Dr. Milind Joshi

Associate Professor, Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Management, Kolhapur,
sg4906@gmail.com

Systems Analyst, Computer Center, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, milindjoshi@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The creation and transfer of tacit to tacit knowledge is very important in higher education. Tacit knowledge is non-linguistic, non-numerical form of knowledge that is highly personal and context specific and deeply rooted in individual experiences, ideas, values and emotions. Since tacit knowledge cannot be specified in detail and is revealed through practice, it cannot be transmitted by prescription but can be transferred only by example or observation. Nonaka's SECI model emphasizes on tacit to tacit knowledge called as socialization. Higher education institutions are main knowledge intensive organizations. The existing research focuses on importance and sharing of tacit knowledge in higher education using different ICT tools and techniques. In order to promote lifelong learning using tacit knowledge, use of informal environment is recommended.

Indexing terms/Keywords

Tacit knowledge, higher education, knowledge transfer, socialization, ICT.



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INTRODUCTION

In today's knowledge economy ability to manage knowledge is crucial. Knowledge has been identified as one of the most important resource that contributes to the competitive advantage of an organization. . The Knowledge is a critical organizational resource that provides a sustainable competitive advantage in a competitive and dynamic economy(Davenport & Prusak,1998). Knowledge is recognition (Know-what), capacity to act (know-how), understanding (know-why) that resides within the mind . Knowledge refers to the capacity for action i.e. “know about” and an understanding of facts , methods , principles, techniques i.e. “know how”. Knowledge includes perception, skills, training, common sense, and experience and helps to draw meaningful conclusion. Polanyi (1966) first divided the human knowledge into two dimensions : explicit and tacit dimensions. Explicit knowledge is codified knowledge that can be specified or communicated verbally or in symbolic forms such as written documents, blueprints or computer programmes. Tacit knowledge is a knowledge that a person can store inside his mind and is developed from direct experience and accomplishment . Higher education institutions are knowledge intensive organizations. These institutions require to obtain, store, share, utilize and generate knowledge so as to train and educate the students effectively (Ozmen, 2010). The whole process of education involves acquisition and transfer of knowledge from one source to another. In higher education to acquire knowledge from different sources and disseminate it to the students is regular practise. By considering the importance of tacit knowledge in higher education, author tried to investigate how tacit knowledge is applicable in every facet of higher education and use of ICT tools and technologies for tacit knowledge transfer in higher education.

TACIT TO TACIT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER :SOCIALIZATION

Since tacit knowledge cannot be captured, it can be shared between a knowledge owner . Nonaka proposed a model for knowledge creation called as SECI model which is a spiral process where tacit and explicit knowledge can be converted in a clockwise spiral form. The Nonaka's model describes both the processes of knowledge creation and knowledge haring where transformations are taking place within and between individuals, groups and organizations which are interconnected. Four modes of Knowledge creation have been identified like Socialization, Externalization, Communication and Internalization as shown in Fig 4.1. Nonaka and Takeuchi suggest that the essential question of knowledge creation is establishing an organization's 'ba' as a common space for creating knowledge. Knowledge creation relies on the selection of both external and internal knowledge, tacit and explicit knowledge and by analyzing existing information. Fig.1 shows the SECI process for knowledge creation.



Fig No. 1 : Nonaka's Model for Knowledge Creation

The socialization mode refers to the conversion of tacit knowledge to the new tacit knowledge through social interactions and shared experience between people who have a common culture and who work together proficiently. Socialization is regarded as an opportunity for participating individuals to share their experiences and to learn through direct exchange of tacit knowledge. Only individuals with higher level of understanding and knowledge richness can transfer tacit knowledge to the others. In the organization, socialization is used by identification and the transfer of best practices. Knowledge sharing among individuals takes place through face-to-face contacts such as meeting, focus groups, conversations at lunchtime, on-the-job training and master-fellow relationships like craftsmanship and interaction with others. Techniques used in Socialization mode are observation, group decision support system and brainstorming.

TACIT TO TACIT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In higher education institutions, knowledge is created by research activity and is transmitted by teaching and consultancy and is maintained in library. Tacit knowledge management is the most important issue in higher education to base their curricula and to improve their performance. It facilitates learning and gives more inspiration for knowledge creation and life-long learning. Capturing tacit knowledge of teachers and make it widely and easily available to other teachers and other constituent bear great importance. Since tacit knowledge is not coded, it is difficult to imitate and transfer it.

Higher education institutions are the paramount organizations for holding, sharing and creating knowledge as their most of the tasks are related to research activities.(Ozmen, 2010). But the knowledge generated by research activities often stays within the laboratory and rarely crosses disciplinary boundaries. The challenge for providing sustainable improvement and efficacy is to capture the tacit knowledge of the expert and senior teachers and make it widely and easily available to



other teachers or other constituent. (Kidwel et al, 2000). Tacit knowledge of teachers is obtained through teaching and professional practices. From the perspective of skills and knowledge of teachers, tacit knowledge can be divided into two types i.e. knowledge on skill of teaching and other is tacit knowledge in cognition including the insight, intuition, feeling, value concept, psychological mode and cultural customs. (Linying Zhang, 2008). Tacit knowledge of teachers is obtained through teaching activity and in research activity. During teaching activity teachers deliver lecture and students participate by asking questions and have some discussions on the subject matter. During this process, knowledge is mainly transferred via direct interactions between teacher and students. Also during research activity, teachers and students accumulate tacit knowledge in laboratory. Teachers are pushed in new creative directions i.e. knowledge creation through reading, writing, brainstorming and questions posed by students on real time and real place problems. Techniques used for tacit to tacit knowledge transfer are structured interview, community of practice(CoP), brainstorming and mentoring program.

USE OF ICT FOR TACIT TO TACIT KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Technology is influencing how people read, write, listen and communicate and create new opportunities for them (Song, 2009). Tacit knowledge exchange or sharing between teachers and students could be enhanced through the use of information and communication Technology (ICT). In these setting teachers and students exchange knowledge by using the following techniques :

- Video conferencing : Video conferencing can be used for transfer of knowledge between teachers and students for long distance communication such as distance learning or virtual postgraduate supervision. Teachers can benefit the use of video conferencing to conduct external examination with other universities without being physically present and thus can save cost of travelling. Any questions related to the course can be further discussed in electronic discussion forum and any announcement can utilize electronic bulletin boards. For ex. Gotowebinar.com is a website that allows users online meeting and document sharing. It allows members of organizations from around the world to be present in one place and exchange ideas, experiences and future plans.
- Online Meeting : To share experience and ideas of academicians from different countries, online meetings can be organized to exchange ideas and future plans.
- Knowledge Map : For researchers, knowledge map or experts' profiles enable the experts and their expertise to be available online and accessible by postgraduate students looking external collaborators.
- Use of Wikis – Wikis are web based software tools where people can post information and edit each other's entries where knowledge is disseminated and expanded through a collaborative effort .The best known Wiki is the Wikipedia.
- Use of Telephone/ Mobile : Teachers and students can use telephone to clear doubts about a particular subject.

REQUIREMENT FOR TACIT TO TACIT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

In higher education Institutions, tacit to tacit knowledge transfer is very important and facilitates life-long learning. When expert teachers socialise and support for exchange of intra-organizational knowledge, this knowledge boosts the performance of higher education institutions and gives it competitive advantage. For the successful implementation of tacit to tacit knowledge transfer following things are recommended (Yvonne Freene et.al, 2011).

- To provide informal environment among teachers and students.
- Appointment of full time management personnel.
- Promote informal communities of practices (CoP) for social interaction.
- To promote teachers to convert their tacit knowledge in the form of explicit knowledge which can be useful for others.
- To maintain a consistent culture of knowledge sharing, reward system in terms of financial incentives like substantial gratuities, wage increase and promotion must be implemented in higher education institutions.
- Top management must provide ICT tools to capture, share and reuse tacit knowledge in higher education institutions.
- Need of staff training programs need to organized like seminars, conference, workshops and faculty development programs to share tacit knowledge in higher education.
- Support collaborative systems among the higher education for the academicians to increase their skills and ability by performing tasks professionally.

6.CONCLUSION

For higher education institutions, there is a need to make use of tacit knowledge effectively and efficiently to achieve breakthrough competitive advantage. Since higher education Institutions are inherently knowledge intensive



organizations, tacit knowledge will always remain an important component in all productive and innovation activities. There is a need to identify a suitable environment where tacit knowledge can be shared and captured. The importance and management of tacit knowledge should have been understood and should have been applied in every process of the higher education institutions like teaching, learning, consultancy, research and administration. If higher education institutions are able to provide quality education and obtain competitive advantage, it will be more successful if it can advance its individual and collective knowledge by producing a suitable environment to create and disseminate its tacit knowledge. In higher education institutions there is a need to create informal environment, mutual trust, mutual cooperation and social community for tacit knowledge transfer and make strategy to capture tacit knowledge of academicians and support collaborative system. A strategy and action plan accompanying to it should be designed by the top management together with the staff for the effective transfer of tacit knowledge.

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