

Providing a Framework for Aligning Human Resource Practices with Knowledge Management Strategy in the Context of Organizational Restructuring

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ABSTRACT

In all organizations, human resource management occupies a significant and special place, to the extent that it has been referred to as the main concern of managers. The necessity of human resource management is evident, as the productivity of human resources can be equated with the productivity of the organization, which is the very essence of an organization. In the last decade, the role of the human approach in development has received great attention from researchers. The importance of this topic can be seen in the role this factor plays in the development process. The greatest competitive advantage of countries is having a capable workforce. The aim of the present study is to provide a framework for aligning human resource practices with knowledge management strategy in the context of organizational restructuring. The research method is descriptive-correlational. The results of the research, using structural equation modeling software, showed that increasing global interactions and developing the level of companies' engagement with their environment encourage organizations to undertake activities that lead to gaining competitive advantage and adapting to complex and dynamic environmental conditions, thus meeting current and future needs. Many companies claim that the pressures from competitive forces due to globalization are increasing, and an organization's ability to cope with these pressures depends on their superior use of human resources. With the growth of industries and knowledge workers, the pressure on the human resources sector has intensified, posing serious challenges to organizational structure.

Introduction

Individuals play a key role in the growth and development of organizations in today's changing and challenging environment. Recruiting talented and capable individuals and retaining them in the organization is becoming increasingly difficult. These challenges have led to a process for identifying, diagnosing, and selecting the right personnel. Furthermore, while the concept of measuring the value of human resources is inherently valuable, understanding how to practically measure the valuation of human resources has become a challenge for most organizations. Therefore, it is essential to identify a systematic mechanism for measuring and recording the wealth of human resources, which can help in comparing and reporting the value of human resources against other organizational resources in business terms (Eric & Mamour, 2005). The inability to measure the value of human resources and to identify it accurately and promptly can reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations. More importantly, the valuation of human resources is related to management for better decision-making, evaluation, and development of human resources. Studies show that the management and reporting of human resources are positively correlated with organizational performance and value (Alm & Dabb, 2010). Nowadays, considering human resources as a solution to organizational problems and the creation of advanced technologies, as well as its position as the driving force of any country, research has been directed towards identifying specialized and expert personnel (Vardahr, 2016; Sarami, 2015; Van Nowai et al., 2015; Kavyous & colleagues, 2015). Humans are regarded as the main capital of any country and are a crucial element in value creation (Farahi, 2011). This type of capital, referred to as the most important measure of wealth (Hong, 2006; Dojaioli, 2011), encompasses all existing knowledge within the country (Kumar & Kumar, 2018; Bentis et al., 2001) and reflects the country's ability to find the best solutions through the knowledge of individuals (Bentis, 2001). Human capital is also defined as the potential and fundamental capabilities of a country (Ovajlia, 2005). Human capital comprises the knowledge and physical and intellectual skills of an individual that turn them into a productive worker. Tacit knowledge exists in an individual's mind when it is created, and for governments to have more capable human capital, they must extract this tacit knowledge from individuals' minds and disseminate it at the national level so that others can utilize it whenever needed (Bentis, 2001). Given the importance of human resources in national development, the competitiveness and survival of developing countries require the identification of suitable individuals who are placed in their rightful positions with specific competencies (Stone & Stone, 2011). Most governments regard human resources as important and fundamental and allocate significant budgets for planning and expenditures related to it. One of the primary responsibilities of governments is to employ capable and effective individuals (Kumar & Kumar, 2018; Jahaniyan, 2011; Ganjinia, 2013).

Companies must enhance the sharing of information within the organization, especially by moving away from a knowledge concealment mindset, to leverage their employees' potential and competitiveness (Connelly et al., 2012). This phenomenon, referring to the intentional concealment of knowledge from others, affects not only financial and operational performance but also organizational culture, as it damages relationships and can foster distrust among employees (Singh, 2019). Simultaneously, several organizational, contextual, and individual determining factors influence individuals' willingness to share or conceal knowledge (Jonasson et al., 2009). Existing research examines the causes of knowledge sharing (KS), but rarely investigates the factors that reduce knowledge sharing. This indicates a clear research gap, as sharing and concealing knowledge are not opposing behaviors fueled by contradictory factors (Khalid et al., 2018).

Therefore, we propose to study knowledge sharing using a combination of perspectives, including the knowledge-based view (Conner & Prahalad, 1996), psychological ownership theory (POT) (Pierce et al., 2003), social exchange theory (SET) (Blau, 1964), and conservation of resources theory (COR) (Hobfoll, 2001). This will portray the joint effects of specific structural and contextual factors on knowledge sharing, providing a realistic understanding of employees' goals. As far as we know, no study has simultaneously considered the capacities of these theories to explain knowledge sharing.

On one hand, we will investigate the likelihood that specific structural factors—such as leadership style (LS), organizational design (OD), and human resource management practices (HRMp)—interact to reduce knowledge sharing. LS primarily relates to leadership characteristics, whereas OD pertains to creating processes, structures, and information technology infrastructures aimed at improving job design and layout. HRMp focuses on supporting employees' career development. On the other hand, this study will explore how organizational justice (OJ) and competitive work environment (CWE), considered specific mediators of the organizational context, contribute to the effects of LS, OD, and HRMp on knowledge sharing. OJ includes three different aspects: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. CWE refers to the increasing pressure for performance within an organization.

To answer the research question, we will use Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)

to analyze 224 survey responses. The results clarify the relationships among LS, OD, HRMp, and knowledge sharing, which have received little attention in the literature (Xiao & Cook, 2019). We will also offer responses to previous studies on knowledge sharing that have focused on OD and CWE, reporting divergent results (Hou et al., 2016; Jaha & Varkki, 2018; Xiao & Cook, 2019).

Based on the study by Abubakar et al. (2019), knowledge hiding (KH) is not merely the absence of knowledge sharing. Connelly et al. (2012) define KH as the intentional effort of an individual to conceal or hide knowledge that has been requested by another person. Thus, this study focuses on situations where a knowledge request is made by one employee to another (Connelly et al., 2012). In contrast, in other circumstances, employees may realize that their knowledge could be beneficial to a colleague and share it without a request from the other party. In such cases, KH does not exist. Connelly et al. (2012) developed a multidimensional framework of KH where an individual can be reasonable, avoidant, or feign ignorance. Reasonable KH refers to a situation where the concealer explains why the information will not be available. Avoidant KH occurs when the concealer offers incorrect or partial information or a misleading promise for a more complete response in the future. Feigning ignorance refers to instances where the concealer pretends to be unaware to avoid providing information.

Several studies have examined the records and predictors of KH (Abubakar et al., 2019; Connelly et al., 2012; Singh, 2019). However, the organizational factors that reduce KH are still unknown. One way organizations can reduce KH is by focusing on management practices, such as adopting certain knowledge management tools, promoting teamwork, emphasizing collective ownership of knowledge, and strengthening individuals' organizational commitment (Peng, 2013). Xiao and Cook (2019) highlight other significant yet underexplored factors, such as team characteristics (e.g., team structure and diversity), individual goal orientation (e.g., learning orientation, performance orientation, and avoidance orientation), specific types of business models (e.g., sharing economy), and organizational values (e.g., work organizations and rewards).

As modern organizations increasingly become team-oriented, leaders play crucial roles in influencing organizational outcomes by shaping employee attitudes and behaviors (Li et al., 2018), both at the group and individual levels (Auh et al., 2014). Leaders can promote helpful behavior and knowledge sharing by directing significant organizational motivations instead of relying on management perceptions, especially for employees with a long tenure in the organization (Liu et al., 2020). They must also strive to embed the organization within a knowledge ecosystem that facilitates knowledge flow (Kuno & Shilachi, 2021; Papa et al., 2021). Most studies describe leaders in terms of leadership models, including transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership (Avolio & Bass, 2001). Bass and Avolio (1993) outline four dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. This type of leader uses charisma and communication to share visions regarding organizational goals, build trust and emotions, and grant employees full freedom to be creative, considerate, and fair. This leadership style is particularly suitable for competitive, turbulent, and rapidly changing markets common in the modern economy. In contrast, the transactional leadership style adopts a more traditional management approach, clarifies subordinates' responsibilities, rewards them for achieving goals, and corrects them, especially when they fail to reach objectives. This leadership style is more commonly used in stable market conditions that do not require adaptation to a more chaotic environment. In the laissez-faire management style, leaders make few decisions and allow their employees to choose the solutions they deem appropriate.

Recent research on business performance raises important questions about the role of leadership styles in shaping employee behavior within organizations, particularly regarding knowledge management (Insolu et al., 2018; Novak et al., 2020). In fact, the topic of leadership styles has been examined in the field of knowledge management, attempting to understand their impact on individuals' motivation to share or hide knowledge (Harder, 2008) and to discover the best ways to manage knowledge (Wang et al., 2014). However, despite the emergence of recent studies (such as Guo et al., 2020; Feng & Wang, 2019; Khalid et al., 2018; Xia et al., 2019), we still lack substantial information about how leadership influences knowledge hiding. Nonetheless, according to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2001), all these leadership styles negatively impact knowledge hiding (Yukl et al., 2013) by pressuring subordinates to overlook their personal interests. COR theory suggests that employees experiencing abusive supervision are likely to suffer psychologically due to loss of internal resources, which may lead to feelings of job stress and insecurity. This experience of losing psychological resources causes subordinates to conceal their knowledge from colleagues to maintain their resources, power, and current position within the organization.

Therefore, employees may be reluctant to spend time and energy responding to others' requests and subsequently engage in knowledge hiding behavior (Gao et al., 2020). Lin and Li (2006) argued that to reduce knowledge hiding in organizations, senior management needs to increase opportunities for subordinates to

share their thoughts and propose new ideas. Avolio (2012) suggested that organizations in highly complex and dynamic environments need effective leadership styles that can motivate subordinates to fully share and not hide knowledge, leading to improved performance. When a leader creates an open and trustworthy environment through mentoring, participative decision-making, informing, and expressing concern, employees are more likely to rise above personal interests and may have less motivation to hide knowledge (Lin et al., 2020). Thus, we state that:

The Knowledge-Based View (KBV) illustrates the relationship between knowledge and corporate structures (Grant, 1996). Since knowledge management depends on social interactions and the flow of knowledge between individuals and departments (Zheng et al., 2010), organizational structure significantly impacts this process (Chen et al., 2010; Chen & Huang, 2009). For example, creating multinational project teams, involving employees in international projects, and regularly organizing meetings for international knowledge exchange promote knowledge sharing and enhance company innovation (Caputo et al., 2021). Furthermore, clarifying the company's operational processes and establishing common goals encourage active employees to share information and better coordinate their actions (Abdulqader et al., 2020). Organizational Development (OD) can be considered a key organizational feature within the KBV framework as it is responsible for the flow of knowledge between individuals and organizational departments (Chen et al., 2010). Existing OD studies rooted in KBV have focused on the formal and informal factors essential for achieving superior company performance (Argote & Faraj, 2016a; 2016b). The formal aspect includes decision-making modes (governance structure, decision-making rights), individual incentives (monetary rewards, job models), information and knowledge processes (KPIs, knowledge management systems), and roles and responsibilities. The informal aspects are related to norms (values, standards), commitments (shared vision, individual aspirations), mindsets (identity, beliefs), and social networks (collaborative space, organizational influence).

Both formal and informal features of Organizational Development (OD) are important for fostering creativity and reducing knowledge hiding (KH) (Connelly et al., 2012). The formalization of the relationships between various activities and personnel defines the roles, responsibilities, and authorities among the members of the organization. In contrast, the informal practices of OD create a protected environment for team creativity, skill development, trust, and accessibility (Fong et al., 2018). Furthermore, according to Conner and Prahalad (1996), the organizational aspect through which individuals collaborate affects the knowledge they apply in business activities. The study by Martín-Pérez et al. (2012) specifically emphasizes the positive impact of empowerment and rewards on knowledge transfer. In this regard, Serneels and Bontis (2016) highlight the availability of knowledge management systems as a condition of OD that reduces knowledge hiding behavior. When employees have access to such systems, they may engage in knowledge sharing activities because it requires no significant effort.

Studies emphasize the importance of the knowledge-based perspective for human resource management in accordance with the demands of the emerging knowledge-based economy (Langenickel et al., 2009; Minbaeva, 2013). Knowledge-based human resource management creates an environment conducive to the sharing and creation of knowledge within an organization (Kiantao et al., 2017; Minbaeva, 2013). HR practices (coaching, incentives, and performance evaluation) enhance the development of business relationships and team networks, leading to improved company performance through better utilization of knowledge (Collins & Clark, 2003). At the organizational level, effective human resource systems positively impact the internal social structure by facilitating networking ties, generalizing reciprocal norms, and creating flexible coordination, which results in efficient use of knowledge resources (Evans & Davis, 2005). At the individual level, purposefully designed HR practices (recruitment systems, training and development, evaluation, and compensation) support knowledge-based behaviors among employees (Housinki et al., 2017; Kiantao et al., 2017). Researchers have even theorized about how human resource management may play a strategic role in creating, storing, and disseminating knowledge in pursuit of competitive advantage (Kang et al., 2007).

Research on the role of HR practices in reducing KH behavior in the workplace is an emerging area of study (Connelly & Zweig, 2015). Demonstrating various causes has been recognized as an important step for human resources in designing the most effective solutions. Mangold (2017) emphasized that job-related reasons (gaining an advantage over colleagues, maximizing personal benefits, or undermining others' performance) may lead to distrust among coworkers, consequently resulting in KH reactions to protect one's position within the organization (Connelly et al., 2012; 2019). While identifying causes can quickly limit the spread of KH throughout the organization, this perspective is weakened when human resources proactively ensure that most compensatory measures are in place (Mangold, 2017). For instance, Dudukh (2020) showed that telecommunications and information technology companies that focus on employee recognition, provide fair rewards, develop competencies, and encourage information-sharing practices demonstrate positive outcomes in reducing KH.

Other human resource researchers have proposed responses to knowledge hiding (KH) based on its three main types. Bari et al. (2019) demonstrated that while HR practices should directly address evasive hiding and foolish behaviors (acting clueless), rational hiding should be considered a distinct factor whose negative impact is more heterogeneous and does not significantly affect team creativity. Rational hiding should be evaluated in light of the specific impact of each case on the value-activity system. Ultimately, human resource management may also address the underlying causes related to personality factors: motivating self-assessment, actively encouraging employees to be aware of each other's jobs, implementing 360-degree feedback regarding hiding behavior, and promoting teamwork (Anand & Hassan, 2019).

Organizational Justice (OJ) can be defined as fairness in the workplace (Cropanzano, 1993). According to Cook and Tredway (2001), OJ has three distinct dimensions. First, distributive justice pertains to the fairness of decision outcomes and is reinforced when results align with implicit allocation norms, such as equity or equality. Second, procedural justice, which refers to the fairness of the processes that lead to decision outcomes, is reinforced by voice during the decision-making process. Third, interactional justice, defined as the interpersonal treatment individuals receive when procedures are implemented, is reinforced when decision-makers treat individuals with sensitivity and explain the logic behind decisions. Injustice concerning these three aspects leads to acute KH among employees (Jahan Zib & colleagues, 2020). Indeed, social exchange theory (SET) suggests that employees seek to maintain a fair balance between organizational inputs and what they receive in return or as rewards (O'Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019). Therefore, their understanding of OJ can moderate their actions and reactions, making them less likely to engage in KH behavior.

Abubakar et al. (2019) proposed that considering an employee's perception of OJ can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how organizational structural factors influence their KH behavior. This study addresses the question of the indirect role of OJ regarding the effects of leadership style (LS), organizational design (OD), and HR practices (HRMp) on KH. In this regard, the ranking of justice is significantly influenced by inclusive leadership style (Tatum et al., 2003) and organizational design (Aubelin & Tatum, 2008), which reduces employees' tendencies to hide knowledge. Additionally, according to studies by O'Connor and Crowley-Henry (2019), employees provided with appropriate information, transparent procedures, and fair treatment believe in the positive effects of HRMp, even if the outcome of knowledge sharing is not favorable for them.

Fletcher and Nusbaum (2010) defined a competitive work environment as an individual's perception of a workplace characterized by structured competition with colleagues for rewards, recognition, and position within the organization. Competitive Work Environment (CWE) presents four dimensions. First, rewards are considered the most apparent aspect of competition. Subordinates may compete to gain tangible benefits, meaning that individuals must perform better than their colleagues to receive rewards.

The second dimension is appreciation or acknowledgment for a commendable achievement. The third aspect of competition pertains to position, referring to the ranking or hierarchy of individuals, groups, organizations, or social activities within a socially agreed and accepted system (Washington & Zajak, 2005). Finally, competition inspired by colleagues constitutes another dimension, indicating that the workplace can become increasingly competitive due to the presence of highly competitive individuals (Sir & Cho, 2010). They may try to outperform each other regardless of the rewards (Fletcher & Nusbaum, 2010). In today's knowledge-based business environment, increased competition in the workplace can be considered a highly stressful situation and may lead to tension among colleagues. The growing pressure to improve performance within an organization results in knowledge hiding and encourages employees to psychologically conceal their knowledge (Anand et al., 2020; Connelly et al., 2012).

Accordingly, we state that Edwards and Cable (2009) argue that workplace characteristics affect colleagues' interaction and behavior differently based on the level of CWE. This creates a tendency toward knowledge hiding (Fletcher & Nusbaum, 2010; Jones et al., 2017). Indeed, although leaders generally foster CWE among employees to enhance performance and achieve organizational goals, this competition can become detrimental when the existing organizational design (OD) and human resource management practices (HRMp) do not support interactions among colleagues and their advancement within the organization (Jones et al., 2017). Thus, considering the position of individuals as the fundamental agents of excellence and national development, one of the essential challenges for any country is the management of skilled and valuable individuals, essentially human resource management. The inability of individuals to be utilized effectively can have negative consequences, which are costly and problematic, leading to threatening repercussions for the country.

Therefore, the aim of our research is to provide a framework for aligning human resource practices with knowledge management strategy in the context of organizational restructuring.

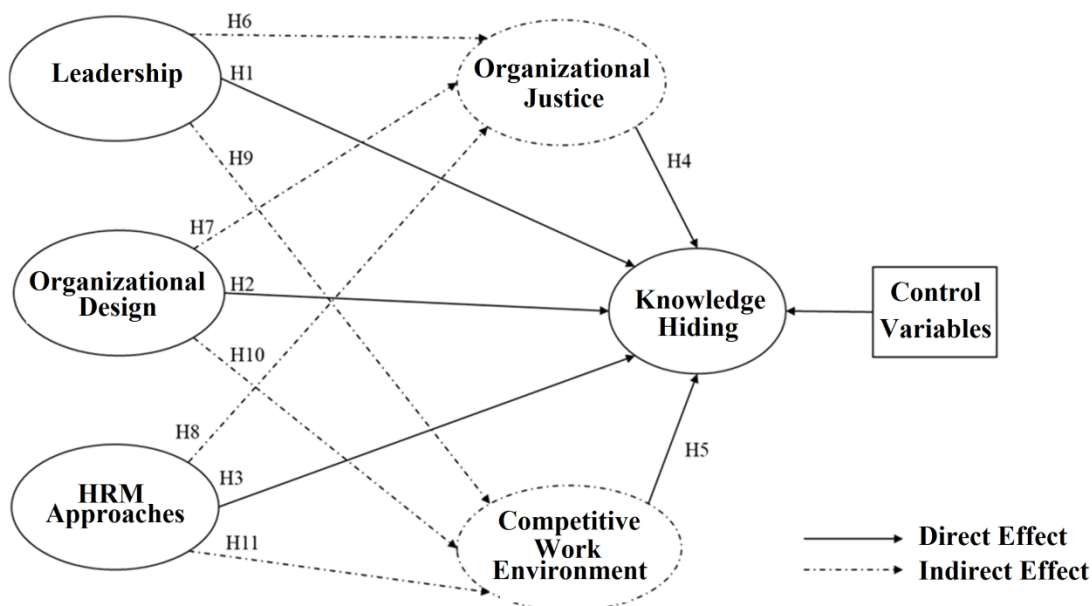
1. Research Methodology

The research method of this study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-correlational in terms of type, conducted through a field study. The statistical population of the research consists of all employees of ... with a total number of 500 individuals. According to Morgan's table, the sample size is 217 individuals. To ensure the return of the questionnaires, 200 questionnaires were randomly distributed among them. The data collection in this research is a combination of library and field methods. The researcher also utilized Persian and Latin sources, including library resources, articles, necessary books, and the global internet network for collecting literature and background on the topic.

• Hypotheses

1. Leadership style has a direct negative impact on knowledge hiding.
2. Organizational design has a direct negative impact on knowledge hiding.
3. HRM approaches have a direct negative impact on knowledge hiding.
4. Organizational justice has a direct negative impact on knowledge hiding.
5. A competitive work environment has a direct positive impact on knowledge hiding.
6. Leadership style has an indirect negative impact on knowledge hiding through organizational justice.
7. Organizational design has an indirect negative impact on knowledge hiding through organizational justice.
8. HRM approaches have an indirect negative impact on knowledge hiding through organizational justice.
9. Leadership style has an indirect positive impact on knowledge hiding through a competitive work environment.
10. Organizational design has an indirect positive impact on knowledge hiding through a competitive work environment.
11. HRM approaches have an indirect positive impact on knowledge hiding through a competitive work environment.

To analyze the research data, the questionnaire data were first entered into SPSS software. Descriptive analyses were then performed to describe the sample and research variables, and the necessary tables and charts were generated, while measures of central tendency and dispersion were calculated. To determine normality, the skewness-kurtosis test was used. If the parametric conditions were met, Pearson's correlation coefficient and multivariate regression analysis were employed to test the research hypotheses. For the effect of the mediating variable, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used with PLS software.



2. Findings

In this section, the research findings are presented using a mixed-methods approach, including qualitative methodology (content analysis) in MAXQDA software and quantitative analysis (structural equation modeling) in the Smart PLS environment.

Figure 1: The Model Illustrated in the PLS Environment

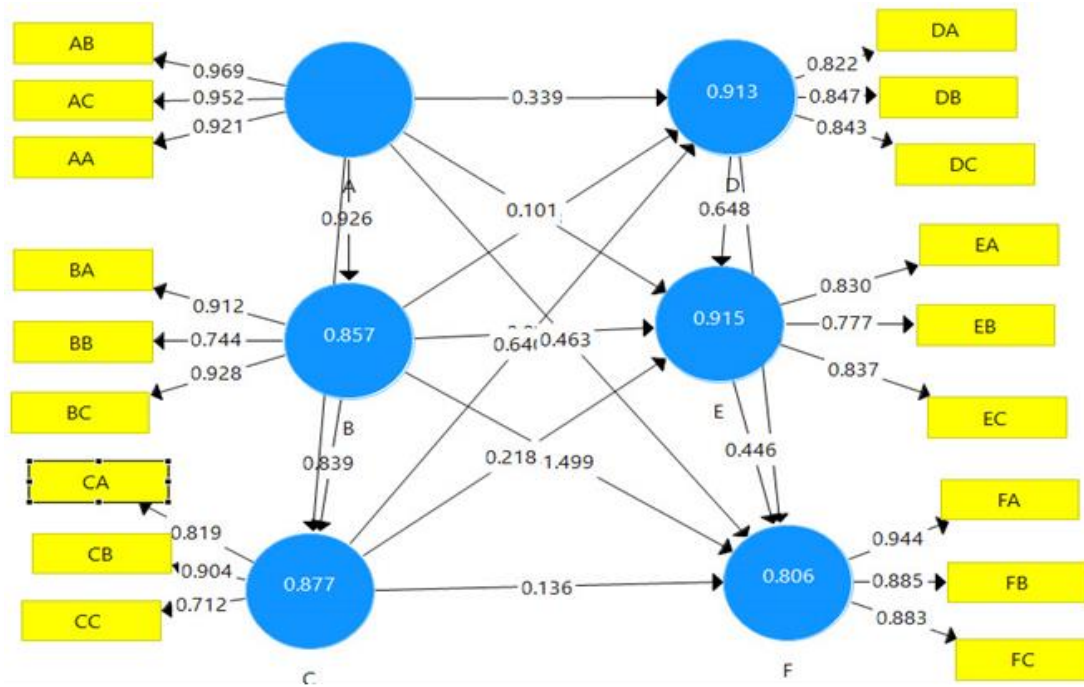


Table 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Research Variables Based on Standardized Weights (Outer Loadings)

Path Analysis in PLS Between Latent Variables	Design Style	Organizational Design	HRM Approaches	Organizational Justice	Knowledge Hiding	Competitive Work Environment
Design Style	1	0.9256	-	-	-	-
Organizational Design	-	1	0.8389	-	-	-
HRM Approaches	-	-	1	0.6401	-	-
Organizational Justice	-	-	-	1	0.6475	-
Knowledge Hiding	-	-	0.2175	-	1	0.4460
Competitive Work Environment	-	-	-	0.999	-	1

To understand the degree of alignment between the empirical data and the structural model, goodness-of-fit indices are used. In structural equation modeling, various indices are employed to ensure the model's goodness of fit. The table below presents the fit indices for the structural modeling of the research model:

Table 2: Fit Indices for the Research Model

Absolute Fit Indices	Root Mean Square Residuals (RMR)	Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)
	0.000	1.000
Comparative Fit of the Research Model	Normed Fit Index (NFI)	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)
	1.000	1.000

As can be observed, the Root Mean Square Residuals (RMR), which represents the difference between the elements of the observed matrix in the sample group and the elements of the estimated or predicted matrices under the assumption that the model is correct, indicates that the closer the RMR for the tested model is to zero, the better the model fits. The value of this index for the research is zero, indicating that the model is well-fitting.

On the other hand, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is calculated based on the correlation derived from path analysis among the variables in the model. The higher the path analysis-based correlation coefficients among the variables in the model, the higher this index will be. The value of this index for the research model is one, which indicates that the correlation based on path analysis among the variables in the model is very significant.

3. Discussion and Conclusion

Considering the impact of Leadership Style (LS) on Knowledge Hiding (KH), the findings indicate that LS reduces KH only through Organizational Justice (OJ) (H6), without a direct connection between the two

variables (H1), and with no indirect effect through CWE (H9). The lack of a direct effect of LS on KH emphasizes that knowledge sharing and KH are not opposite sides of the same coin (Connelly et al., 2012; Khalid et al., 2018).

Furthermore, our results show that when OJ is regarded as a value within the organization, LS positively influences interpersonal relationships among colleagues, fosters trust, facilitates identity and organizational commitment, and thereby reduces KH behaviors (Abubakar et al., 2019). In such a context, it is easier for leaders to encourage their subordinates to adopt positive mindsets that, by influencing personalities and individual capabilities, reduce KH (for example, some employees may seek recognition and require coaching and/or expression of concerns, while others may wish to be involved in the decision-making process) (Bryant, 2003; Lin & Hsiao, 2014). For instance, leaders can strive to align organizational processes around common goals that steer employees away from individual instrumental thinking (Abdullah et al., 2019).

Both transformational and transactional leaders do not encourage their subordinates toward such inefficient behaviors that may be detrimental to the organization, especially when social and structural justice is developed and implemented. Transactional leaders focus on addressing situational problems and rewarding performance, thereby paying attention to structural justice, which encourages employees to share their knowledge (Abrellin & Tatum, 2008). Transformational leadership is more closely associated with social justice within the organization. The charisma, intelligence, and emotional acuity of such leadership foster trust and justice, helping employees to be accountable and, as a result, not engage in KH.

Finally, our study emphasizes that CWE does not influence the relationship between LS and KH, suggesting that a fair workplace is a necessary condition for reaping the benefits of an effective LS. This finding aligns with Tatum et al.'s (2003) hypothesis that there is a close relationship between leadership style and patterns of organizational justice.

When examining the effects of Organizational Development (OD) on Knowledge Hiding (KH), the tested model revealed a non-significant direct relationship between these two constructs (H2), which may be due to the difficulty in distinguishing a multifaceted aspect of the organization as OD. Regarding the indirect effects of OD, our results emphasize a significant negative impact on Organizational Justice (OJ) (H7) and a lack of significant impact on Competitive Work Environment (CWE) (H10). The study by Serneels and Bontis (2016) may offer an explanation for these direct and indirect effects. The authors demonstrated that the implementation of knowledge management systems and knowledge policies does not affect KH, while ethical values of justice and trust reduce this behavior.

Additionally, the results from the indirect relationships indicate that formal decision-making modes and informal norms are effective in reducing employees' tendencies to hide knowledge only when justice is strongly embedded in organizational processes. Our findings align with the hypotheses of Engel et al. (2014), which state that organizational procedures that ensure equal and transparent participation of each member are predictors of enhanced collective performance through knowledge exchange. Studies in the area of collective intelligence (Woolley et al., 2015) illustrate how aspects such as the level of diversity in a group can enhance or diminish collective performance. The authors note how diversity contributes to creative or innovative tasks while decreasing overall task effectiveness when efficiency is the primary goal (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Effective OD, by balancing expertise and diversity within groups (Boonbouv, 2009), should create an optimal ecosystem to ensure equality among participants in discussions (Engel et al., 2014) and maintain openness in the creation of shared knowledge (Connelly et al., 2012).

Regarding the direct and indirect effects of Human Resource Management practices (HRMp) on KH, our research provides no evidence of a significant direct relationship between the variables (H3). This result supports previous studies that emphasized that investment in HRMp to create a knowledge base within the organization is only feasible when considering contextual conditions (Gomez et al., 2012). In fact, to reduce KH, human resource managers' actions should be oriented towards the individual causes of this behavior, as well as organizational, collegial, and procedural causes (Anand & Hassan, 2019). In this context, we found a negative indirect effect of HRMp on KH through OJ (H8) and simultaneously a positive indirect effect through CWE (H11).

Therefore, our research indicates that HR practices (HRMp) stimulate employee knowledge hiding (KH) behavior depending on the levels of justice and competition in the workplace. On one hand, when HRMp supports the creation of a fair work environment, it leads to increased openness among colleagues. Qualifying employees perceive more favorable Organizational Justice (OJ) and therefore have a greater willingness to share their knowledge (O'Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019). On the other hand, when HRMp triggers high levels of competition, it leads to increased KH. Opportunities and rewards for career development based on the better performance of colleagues create greater territorial feelings and motivations for KH (Fletcher & Nussbaum, 2010). Consequently, HRMp should focus on enhancing overall communication among

representatives and employees in the environment to reduce organizational disruptions and stimulate collaboration (Cross et al., 2007). Additionally, human resources must ensure that they address generational gaps to create a balance between competition and collaboration. Bryan et al. (2006) demonstrated that long-tenured employees often have good communication with each other, while many newcomers may struggle to effectively engage in the organization's value system.

Finally, our study examines the direct effects of OJ and Competitive Work Environment (CWE) simultaneously, while most previous research focused separately on each of these factors (Hou et al., 2016; Jaha & Varkki, 2018; Xiao & Cook, 2019) and reported varying results regarding their impacts. Our parallel examination, which aligns with the actual organizational climate, reveals the nature of these factors' effects in organizations where fair behavior and competition among employees exist. The first factor reduces KH (H4), while the second reinforces it (H5). These results support the hypotheses of multiple researchers who state that a high CWE creates unhealthy pressure that leads to knowledge hiding (Connelly et al., 2012), while equality in tasks, rewards, and procedures fosters knowledge sharing (Abubakar et al., 2019).

This study offers guidelines for professionals to reduce knowledge hiding (KH) attitudes in organizations. Our results indicate that the benefits of Leadership Style (LS) and Organizational Development (OD) can only be realized through Organizational Justice (OJ). It appears that having an efficient and proactive manager, along with working in an organization with appropriate structural and cultural levels alongside structural and social justice, can encourage employees to be more open to disseminating their knowledge. Therefore, employees should ensure that justice is upheld through the distribution of tasks and rewards, interaction with senior management, and the procedural aspects of job-related decisions to benefit from effective LS and OD. High levels of justice are essential, even to compensate for the inevitable damages of CWE evidenced in our findings. Social and structural justice is beneficial for reducing levels of KH for the advantage of the company and society as a whole.

Beyond the direct damages of CWE on KH, this factor may also change the benefits of HRMp, turning them into a facilitator of KH within organizations. These results align with previous research (Ali, 2008; Lazar & Friedman, 2007) that highlight the importance of network flows and collaborative networks in supporting knowledge sharing. In this context, studies related to adopting a network approach have shown that considering real information flows can reduce organizational disruptions and direct management to focus on network points for expanding or reducing exchanges. To this end, organizations can utilize social network analysis and organizational networks to map information and knowledge flows and evaluate their members' centrality concerning CWE approaches. The outcome of an effective HRMp, taking into account the negative impact of CWE, indicates attention to the underlying structure of organizational collaboration patterns (Cross & Parker, 2004).

In this light, human resources may foster the formation of a set of approaches (Wenger & Snyder, 2000) that enhance communication and exchanges throughout the ecosystem. Additionally, since the findings from the indirect results suggest that HRMp reduces KH through OJ, managers should strive to maximize behavioral justice among colleagues to lessen their inclination to hide knowledge. Overall, this study may call upon professionals to create an appropriate OD for knowledge sharing, adopt suitable leadership styles, implement fair behaviors, and establish a proper balance between justice and competition to maximize the effectiveness of their human resource management strategies.

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