Fostering Knowledge Sharing Behavior in Educational Institutes of Thailand

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Abstract

There are number of factors that may affect the knowledge sharing behavior of employees at the workplace. Following this, the purpose of the study is to determine the effect of CSR and EL on KSB including the mediating effect of cognitive meaningfulness and positive affective tone. This study is based on the cross-sectional and quantitative design. Data collection was done through random sampling technique. The population was taken from the faculty members of higher education institutes situated in Thailand. Sample size was 300 faculty members. The findings of the study show that the role of EL and CSR is very important in facilitating the employee's knowledge sharing behavior. Moreover, the culture of CSR enables the employees to crave for job meaningfulness at the workplace. Likewise, ethical leadership arouses positive emotion among the employees which eventually make their belief stronger on the leadership decisions. Thus, CSR by ensuring positive affective tone foster the knowledge sharing behavior of the Thai academic staff and on the other hand ethical leadership via strengthening the workers cognitive meaningfulness makes certain the sharing of knowledge and information among the employees the Thai higher educational institutes. This study was conducted on single industry -the education industry. Secondly, this study has covered only the educational institutes of Thailand.
Keywords: Ethical Leadership, Corporate Social Responsibility, Cognitive Meaningfulness, Positive Affective Tone, Knowledge Sharing Behavior

Introduction

Up to now, business related firms are facing fierce competition globally in the knowledge-based economies. In order to positively handle such competition, firm should take steps in synthesizing the knowledge among workers to keep them encouraged for getting the job done effectively and to fortifying the firm's competitive edge. Knowledge is very important resource of the organizations, which make sure their innovation and effectiveness. It has become necessary for the firms to ensure the knowledge sharing behaviors to strengthen their competitive edge for a long period of time (He, Baruch, & Lin, 2014). On the same note, workers who fully dedicate themselves to their job-related activities are tending to foster the best interest and operations of their firm (Petry, Andrade, Rash, & Cherniack, 2014). Likewise, knowledge sharing intentions of the employees determine the firm's success (Lin, 2010).

Previously, studies regarding the knowledge sharing behaviors of the employees have usually followed social exchange and social capital approaches to determine the predictors (Bavik, Tang, Shao, & Lam, 2018). Yet negligible research has conduct through an ethical lens to

examine the factors related to the patterns of employee's knowledge sharing behavior (Bavik et al., 2018). In other words, what mediating mechanism determine the employee's KSB and appears to be the first gap of this study purposes to fill.

Problem Statement

The government of Thailand facilitates Thai academics to enhance their research-related capabilities by publishing the articles in the reputed and indexed internal journals. Yet still universities are not getting the required results. Thus, Thai scholars may have faced more serious problems or obstacles to publish their research results in reputable international journals and because of insufficient knowledge and resources Thai academics are experiencing research of low quality and teaching so consequently few universities in Thailand ranked in the top 500 in the tables of global league.

So, the purpose of the study is to determine the effect of CSR and EL on KSB in the Higher educational institutes of Thailand including the mediating effect of cognitive meaningfulness and positive affective tone.

Literature Review

Knowledge Sharing Behavior

Knowledge defined as "a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. It originates and is applied in the mind of knowing person" (Ford & Chan, 2003). This definition clearly represents the difference of between tacit knowledge based on an individual's expertise and experience and explicit knowledge a fact and written in the books and articles (Hau, Kim, & Lee, 2016). Moreover, Yi (2009) defined KSB "a set of individual behaviors involving sharing one's work-related knowledge and expertise with other members within one's organization". KSB is basically the behavioral and cognitive process relating with employees (Yeo & Marquardt, 2015). In order to stimulate KS successfully, firms must understand the KSB of the employees (Coradi, Heinzen, & Boutellier, 2015) and how the measurement can be done regarding the surety of the knowledge sharing. Regarding the cognitive elements of the procedures, employee's involvement is considered as very important phenomena aspect (Hau et al., 2016). There are number of factors that foster the KS process such as cooperative behavior of management and employees, effective communication, collaboration whenever needed and interaction. However, Rousseau, Aubé, and Savoie (2006) discussed that it is unclear that such aspects have used inconsistently in facilitating the KSB. Normally a opposition comes forward, with a difference between prolonged, independent collaboration and brief interactions (Storey & Perks, 2015). These categories are equally throwing very important effects on innovation but having strong collaboration seems more influenced than interaction (Aulawi, 2018).

Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is determined through the firm's transparency and ethical relationship with all the firm's stakeholders along with the accomplishment of firm's corporate goals which are aligned with the development of the society in terms of conserving cultural and environmental resources for the upcoming generations, promoting decrease in societal problems and respecting diversity (Advantage, 2020). Although, CSR make a way for the firms in playing their part for the wellness of the society, it also furnish the opportunity for creating a competitive edge and building positive repute of the firm in the volatile business environment (Smith, 2007).

As a result, when the action plans related with CRS are properly implemented and internalized within the firm as the CRS actions enable the firms to get competitive edge over the competitors. Thus far, if firm successfully develop CRS projects linked with its business activities, it might also generate valuable outcomes for the firms and putting the firm at unique

and strong position in the market (Advantage, 2020). Therefore, when CRS is included in the firm's strategy then it can give the long-term advantages to the firms by creating inimitable and sustainable competitive edge (Smith, 2007).

In general, CRS is taken as the philosophy of the management Carroll and Shabana (2010) which can be described as CRS basically lies in the concept of management via aligning the societal as well as concern of environment in their business activities and interfacing with stakeholders (Herremans, Nazari, & Mahmoudian, 2016). It should also be implanted in the firm's culture and, from this point of view; societal practices need to be considered even if they have no direct link with the financial outcomes of the firm. The perspective of CRS trigger the sense of self-esteem and pride that firm is concerned for the wellness of the society along with its financial motives which in return generate the positive behavioral outcomes at the place of work (Vishwanathan, van Oosterhout, Heugens, Duran, & Van Essen, 2020). Furthermore, CRS also instill the sense of meaningfulness in the work life of the employees and keep them motivated as employees crave for the meaningful jobs (Vishwanathan et al., 2020).

Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership (EL) through social exchange perceptions and social learning, Brown, Treviño, and Harrison (2005) defined it "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to the followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (p.120). Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum, and Kuenzi (2012) stated that by the supervision of EL the supporters copy their leader believed and behavior to make an important effect on ethical behavior of follower.

EL should comprise the distinctiveness of both moral manager and person (Trevino, Hartman, & Brown, 2000). Moral individual feature of EL examines the attributes and additionally character of the leader. EL represent certain attributes, for example, genuineness, respectability, honesty, receptiveness to information, regard and decision making principal, and worries for other people (Trevino et al., 2000). Though moral supervisor part of EL manages how leaders utilize their administrative force and leadership position to empower and advance ethical guidelines and ethical practices in the work environment. EL should be both moral person and manager (Brown & Mitchell, 2010). However, profound quality must be a significant part of EL self-idea just as the core values for the leadership's each course of activities.

EL as the procedure in which a leader impacts group activity to the organizational objectives' fulfillment in a socially capable manner (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2009). All the more explicitly, this definition regards ethical leader who is good and mindful in their activities should be helpful for all partners including society as well as organization (Den Hartog, 2015). Essentially, a leader is viewed as ethical whose don't purpose to hurt others and consistently regards all the influenced parties' privileges. In like manner, EL must take part in the honorable demonstrations and evade destructive function to others. In these definitions, they take EL more in which they considered the reason for the leadership conduct as opposed to normatively appropriateness (Kanungo, 2001).

EL is defined "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Brown et al., 2005). On the same note, morality is the fundamental aspect of EL and it also sometime work as a "Moral person" who shows the trustworthiness, reliability and honesty.

EL makes sure the opportunities for the development of the employees and also assists them in their task accomplishment and introduces different activities to enhance their potential (Chen & Hou, 2016), which as a result make them competent and proficient (Yidong & Xinxin, 2013). In addition, EL gives employees the constructive feedback which also play very important role

in making them more proficient and skilled (Feng, Zhang, Liu, Zhang, & Han, 2018). Lastly, EL also provides freedom and give them control on the job that enable them to experience the feelings of being self-determinant (Yidong & Xinxin, 2013). Zheng et al. (2015) argued that EL generate such conditions which help in expanding the positive resources in terms of spreading positive emotions and energy by lessening the negative impact of emotional exhaustion. EL foster pleasant work atmosphere in which constructive communication and higher level of liking is common, thus making possible the worker's PAT (Brown et al., 2005). On the same note, EL ensure the purposefulness at the workplace by positively influencing the worker's cognitive meaningfulness (Wang & Xu, 2019).

Cognitive Meaningfulness
The fundamental nature of cognitive meaningfulness (CM) represents the connection between worker's self-concept and the type of organization they work for, and also they make attempts to fostering the knowledge sharing behavior (Glavas & Kelley, 2014). The meaningful work has a significant importance in human life because the quality and the meaningfulness of the work clearly affect the life of the person. The meaning of work described by Rosso, Dekas, and Wrzesniewski (2010) "the positive and important contribution of the job to the meaning of life for individuals, and also as the satisfaction that a parson receives from his/her job". Lips-Wiersma and Morris (2009) defined the work meaningfulness described that how meaning full work effect the individuals working patterns and how does it influence and shape the attitudes and behaviors of the individual for life. Moreover, when employees experience meaningful work at the workplace they are likely to get benefits economically, emotionally, cognitively and behaviorally (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). Likewise, Factors that enhance the interest in meaningful job based on hypothesis which is organizational and personal factors are significantly linked with the acuity of meaning (Lysova, Allan, Dik, Duffy, & Steger, 2019). On the same note, substantial enhancement would be possible in trusting on organizational values, feelings of being proficient, job performance, and firm devotion level for the workers etc (Lysova et al., 2019).

Positive Affective Tone
The concept of positive affective tone represents the feelings of being fully energetic, increased level of pleasurable engagement and full concentration (Tsai, Ma, Lin, Chiu, & Chen, 2014). Likewise, "Positive affective tone is regarded as a good mood or pleasant feeling states that inspires employees to view things in an optimistic light and energizes them to cooperate, help, and share information with each other" (Collins, Jordan, Lawrence, & Troth, 2016). Positive affects represents that to what extent an individual experience enthusiastic state of mind, show activeness and stay alert, However, negative affect is all about to what extent an individual feels nervousness, anger, fear and disgust (Tsai et al., 2014). Affects are able to define into trait and state affect. Trait affects can be described as individual's general inclination towards experiencing a specific affect, which is typically categorized as negative affect, and positive affect. Furthermore, according to the research PA and NA stay stable over time and consider as a orthogonal construct (Tsai et al., 2014).

However, state affects reflects as an individual's current experience of affect for example being rude or aggressive at colleague. Thus, it also imperative to notify that affective states are clearly influenced by the person's affective tendencies such as (NA and PA), moreover, such states also shaped by the involvement of the other individuals in their lives, such as involvement of colleague or supervisor at the workplace (Cheshin, Rafaeli, & Bos, 2011). Based on these circumstances, individual's affect may converge, that is, persons may find themselves more similar in their affect-related experiences. Specifically, according to Wu and Wang (2015) in the context of work-setting individuals may experience similar affect in their workgroups.

Hypothesis
H1: Positive effect of cognitive meaningfulness on knowledge sharing behavior

**H2:** Positive effect of CSR on cognitive meaningfulness
H3: Positive effect of ethical leaders on positive affective tone
H4: Positive effect of positive affective tone on knowledge sharing behavior
H5: Mediating effect of cognitive meaningfulness between CSR and knowledge sharing behavior
H6: Mediating effect of positive affective tone between ethical leaders and knowledge sharing behavior

Research Framework
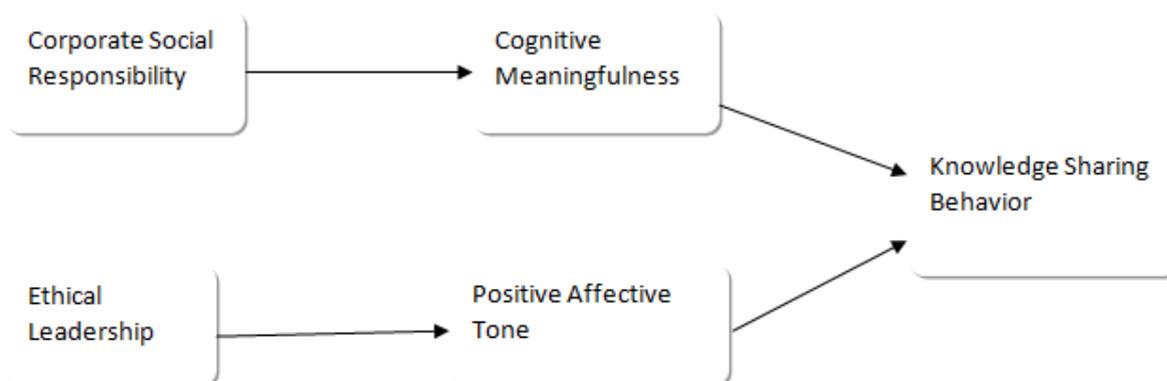
Methodology

Participants

There were 300 participants doing job in Higher education Institutes of Thailand. Both male and female with the ratio 33: 67 percent respectively participated. The age of participants, 64% were less than 35 and 36 % were more than 35. Further, the experiences who have more than 15 years been 29% and less than 15% were 71%. The Procedure of the data in this study for data collection was from teachers who were permanently doing jobs in Thai Higher education Institutes. Simple random sampling technique was used. Participants were informed to fill the survey, part of this study on knowledge sharing behavior. Participants were participated voluntary and they were informed that their feedback would be confidential as well as anonymous. Participants have returned their questionnaires in a given envelope. A total of 213 surveys were returned and 196 were able to do the analysis.

Measurement

There are three items of CSR, cognitive meaningfulness has eight items, ethical leadership has seventeen items, positive affective tone has twelve items and knowledge sharing behavior has twelve items. Five-point Likert scale was used to get the responses.

Research Findings

In addition, the validity of the constructs is measured through convergent validity (CV) and discriminant validity (DV). Results find shown in table 1 that the values of AVE for all the latent constructs are greater than 0.50 as stated by (Chin, 1998). Duarte and Raposo (2010) argued that discriminant validity (DV) indicates that how much latent constructs is distinctive from others.
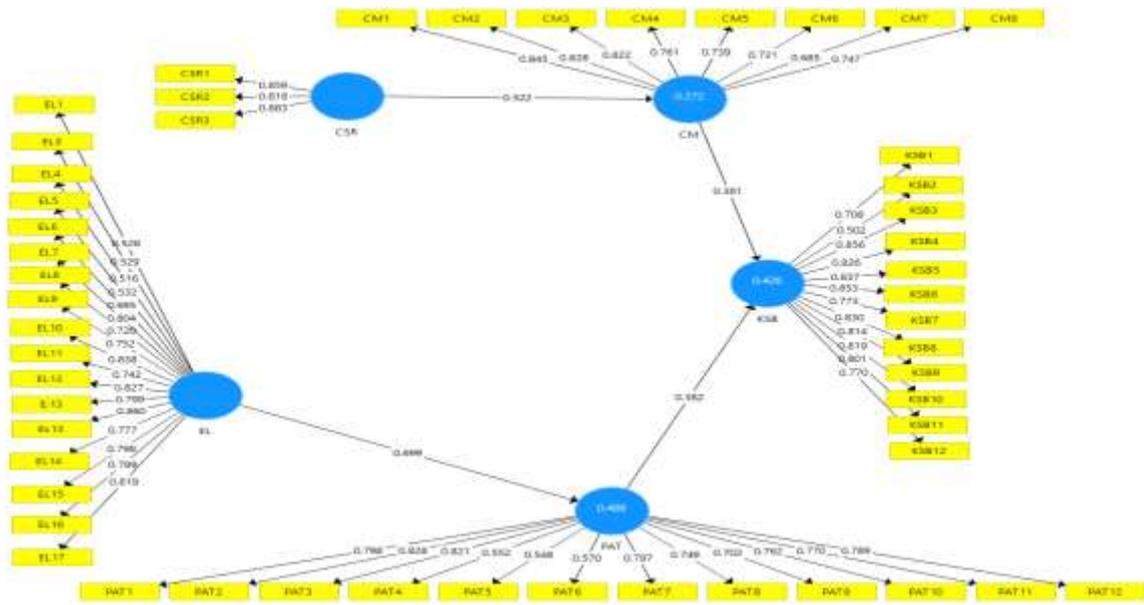
Figure 1 Measurement Model

Discriminant validity means at what level a latent construct is really dissimilar from other constructs (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). Thus, discriminant validity suggests that in the model, a variable is independent as well as taken the phenomena that are not signified by other variables. There are two methods for the discriminant validity such as cross loading as well as Fornell-Lacker criterion. These methods measure the discriminant. However, the current study measures the discriminant validity (DV) through the method of Fornell and Larcker (1981) by taking the square root of Average Variance Extracted of all the latent constructs as shown in Table 2 with the bold value in the correlation matrix diagonal. The study results in Table 2 show that the square roots of Average Variance Extracted are greater.

Table 1 Cronbach's Alpha

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
CM	0.902	0.921	0.595
CSR	0.815	0.89	0.729
EL	0.944	0.951	0.539
KSB	0.943	0.951	0.621
PAT	0.918	0.931	0.534

Table 2 Discriminant Validity

Constructs	CM	CSR	EL	KSB	PAT
CM	0.772				
CSR	0.522	0.854			
EL	0.495	0.522	0.734		
KSB	0.558	0.476	0.508	0.788	
PAT	0.465	0.487	0.699	0.559	0.731

Structural Model Assessment

The second part of the data analysis in structural model assessment (SMA) of hypotheses both direct and indirect measurement. Direct hypotheses for accepting or rejecting were measured as shown in Table 4.3. All the relationships with t-value greater than 1.96 and P value is 0 less

than 0.05 would be accepted. The relationship of CM and KSB is significant and positive. Thus, H1 is accepted. Since t value is 7.326 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.381 in Table 3. Further, the relationship of CSR and CM is significant and positive. So, H2 is accepted. The effect of ethical leadership and positive affective tone has positive and significant relationship. Since t value is 9.699 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.522 in Table 3. So, H3 is accepted. Since t value is 20.66 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.382 in Table 3. The effect of PAT on KSB has positive and significant relationship. So, H4 is accepted. Since t value is 6.870 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.382 in table 3.

Table 3 Direct Relationship

Hypothesis	Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Decision
H1	CM -> KSB	0.381	0.382	0.052	7.326	0	Accepted
H2	CSR -> CM	0.522	0.519	0.054	9.699	0	Accepted
H3	EL -> PAT	0.699	0.699	0.034	20.66	0	Accepted
H4	PAT -> KSB	0.382	0.38	0.056	6.87	0	Accepted

In the table 4, the results show that the mediating effect of cognitive meaningfulness between CSR and KSB as the t-value 5.701 greater than 1.96, p= 0.000< 0.05 and β=0.198 is significant. Thus, H5 is accepted. Similarly, in the table 4, the results show that the mediating effect of PAT between EL and KSB as the t-value 6.427 greater than 1.96, p= 0.000< 0.05 and β=0.267 is significant. Thus, H6 is accepted in Table 4.

Table 4 Indirect Relationship

Hypothesis	Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Decision
H5	CSR -> CM -> KSB	0.198	0.035	5.701	0	Accepted
H6	EL -> PAT -> KSB	0.267	0.042	6.427	0	Accepted

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is measured through the accuracy in prediction of the model. Therefore, value of R^2 is measured how PLS model asses the data. The more the R^2 value appears the more the variance has been observed the items. The R^2 values must lie between 0 and 1, wherever higher values mean higher accuracy prediction. More precisely, R^2 values for endogenous, CM is 0272, and KSB 0.426 and PAT is 0.489 displays predictive accuracy.

Table 5 R^2

Constructs	R Square	R Square Adjusted
CM	0.272	0.270
KSB	0.426	0.423
PAT	0.489	0.488

In the end, the quality of model is measured through construct cross-validated redundancy called predictive relevance (Q2). Achieving a certain quality of model, the value of Q2 should be greater than 0 (Chin, 1998). The value of Q2 of cognitive meaningfulness is 0.148 >0,

knowledge sharing behaviour is 0.244 >0 and positive affective meaningfulness is 0.239>0 in table 6.

Table 6 Q²

Constructs	SSO	SSE	Q² (=1-SSE/SSO)
CM	3,120.00	2,658.25	0.148
KSB	4,680.00	3,537.81	0.244
PAT	4,680.00	3,559.80	0.239

Discussion

The relationship of CM and KSB is significant and positive. Thus, H1 is accepted. Since t value is 7.326 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.381. Further, the relationship of corporate of social responsibility and cognitive meaningfulness is significant and positive. So, H2 is accepted. The effect of EL and positive affective tone has positive and significant relationship. Since t value is 9.699 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.522. So, H3 is accepted. Since t value is 20.66 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.382. The effect of PAT on KSB has positive and significant relationship. So, H4 is accepted. Since t value is 6.870 greater than 1.96 and P value is 0.00 less than 0.05 and beta value is 0.382. In the table 4.4, the results show that the mediating effect of cognitive meaningfulness between CSR and KSB as the t-value 5.701 greater than 1.96, p= 0.000< 0.05 and β=0.198 is significant. Thus, H5 is accepted. Similarly, in the table 4.4, the results show that the mediating effect of PAT between EL and knowledge sharing behavior as the t-value 6.427 greater than 1.96, p= 0.000< 0.05 and β=0.267 is significant. Thus, H6 is accepted.

Limitation of the Study

The study has few limitations. First this study was conducted on single industry -the education industry. Secondly, this study has covered only the Thai educational institutes. Thirdly, this study didn't cover the mix or qualitative method of data analysis instead it followed the quantitative approach to get the results from the data analysis. Fourthly, the antecedents of this study only cover the organizational context (CSR and ethical leadership) and didn't cover the employee's personality traits. So, future researcher should measure KSB through employee psychological empowerment.

Managerial Implication

In the higher education institutes, the Vice chancellor or deans should create such atmospheres that will helpful KSB. Since top management should be responsible for enhancing employee's well-being (Ali, Naveed, ul Hameed, & Rizvi, 2018). Top management should assist to fulfil the CSR for the faulty members and top management should behave ethical with faculty members to improve their KSB.

Conclusion of the Study

This study is aimed to determine the simultaneous effects of CSR and ethical leadership in ensuring the knowledge sharing behavior of the Thai academic staff with the mediating effect of cognitive meaningfulness and positive affective tone. According to the findings of this study the role of ethical and CSR is very important in facilitating the employee's knowledge sharing behavior. Moreover, the culture of CSR arouses positive emotion among the employees as they crave for the job meaningfulness at the workplace. Likewise, ethical leadership helps the employees in finding meanings in their jobs which eventually make stronger their cognitive meaningfulness. Thus, CSR by ensuring positive affective tone foster the knowledge sharing behavior of the Thai academic staff and on the other hand ethical leadership via strengthening the workers cognitive meaningfulness make certain the sharing of knowledge and information among the employees of the higher educational institutes of Thailand.

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