



Studying the effect of components of organizational culture on knowledge management in educational-treatment hospitals of Kerman: 2012

Naime Pourtaheri and Mohamad Reza Aalae

Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch, Fars, Department of Health Services Administration, Fars, Iran

ABSTRACT

Knowledge management is one of the great achievements of the information and knowledge age. Research shows that the most important factor in the success of knowledge is knowledge-based culture. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the impact of organizational culture on knowledge management; the aim of this study is to examine the impact of organizational culture elements on knowledge management in educational-treatment hospitals in Kerman. This descriptive, cross-sectional and applied study was carried out in 2012 in educational-treatment hospitals of Kerman. Statistical universe included all administrative and Para-clinical staff of educational-treatment hospitals; of them, 258 ones were selected using random cluster sampling method. Data was collected through questionnaires and was analyzed using anova, t-Test, Pearson correlation and spss statistical software. most studied subjects considered status of organizational culture average (average score: 3.09). The highest score was related to the component "adapt ability culture" with average score of 3.24, and the lowest was related to "collaboration culture" with average score of 2.97. Knowledge management was also in poor condition with average score of 2.76. Finally, a statistically significant relationship was obtained between organizational culture and knowledge management with a correlation coefficient of $r=0.56$; therefore, as organizational culture increases, knowledge management increases too, and all organizational culture components affect knowledge management. organizational culture was in average condition and knowledge management was in poor condition. Concerning a statistically significant relationship between organizational culture and knowledge management, it can be concluded that it will result in successful changes in hospitals and will help managers make a systematic prediction of change priorities and codify strategies to perform management techniques and processes successfully.

Keywords: organizational culture, collaboration culture, compatibility culture, mission culture, adaptability culture, knowledge management

INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture is considered as the most influential factor in knowledge management and organizational learning[1].

Suppositions or fundamental beliefs are indicative of explanations and interpretations which people would use to understand truths around themselves and make these truths more tangible and understandable for themselves. As people in an organization decide to expose problems and use opportunities, these suppositions would be formulated, afterwards they would be transmitted to other members of the organization. We can say that a specific culture has emerged when all members of an organization believe these suppositions and beliefs. Values are more observable

indications of fundamental beliefs, as they show some norms of the society and such norms would consequently define rules based on which people would interact[2].

Knowledge management is a set of processes for understanding and applying knowledge strategic resources in an organization. It is a structured approach which proposes methods for recognition, assessment, organizing storing and applying knowledge in order to meet the needs and aims of the organization[3].

Knowledge management is a process by which organizations are able to detect, select, organize, distribute and transmit vital information and experiences which would be used in activities like problem resolution, dynamic learning, strategic programming and decision making[4].

Today knowledge management is considered the main source of competitiveness. This does not mean that in the present competitive world, knowledge management cannot be used to gain competitive advantage, to accomplish goals and to be creative, but decisively it can be claimed that today knowledge management skills could be used to enter inventiveness into organizations.

In modern economy, knowledge is the source of economical, industrial developments and other traditional factors like land, workforce and money are standing at subsequent levels of importance[5].

Two researchers believe that organizational culture [organizational subcultures] could affect knowledge management in four different ways [2].

1. Supposed culture which indicate the most important kind of knowledge.
2. Culture in interpersonal and organizational relations act as a mediator variable.
3. Culture set the scene, for social interaction [reciprocal relationship between members of an organization.
4. Culture formulates needed processes for modern knowledge production and selection.

So far numerous studies have been carried out inside and outside Iran on the relationship between organizational culture and knowledge management: for example, Tabibi and Aghababa [2009] carried out a study entitled “studying the components of knowledge management in educational hospitals of Iran University of Medical Science[6]. Karami conducted a study entitled “examining the relationship between organizational culture and the establishment of knowledge management in the center of BahmanAutomotiveGroup”in2005[7]. In 2002, Pauline and Mason carried out a study entitled “knowledge management in New Zealand: obstacles and motives”[8]. Candloval and Goshchak conducted a study in 2003inAustralia entitled “knowledge management in law firms”[9]. Moreover,in2007,MingFung Laand Googang Lee carried out a study entitled “the relationship between organizational culture and executive activities of knowledge management[10].

Concerning the studies carried out in this field, one of the main obstacles to establish knowledge management in organizations is organizational culture; since most of the studies have been conducted in industrial places, it is necessary to examine this relationship in health and treatment organizations such as hospitals. Since hospitals are considered one of the most important organizations which provide health and treatment services and which play an important role in preserving and improving patients’ physical and mental health, paying specific attention to the effect of organizational culture on knowledge management in hospitals seems more important and sensitive than in any other organizations. Thus, researchers evaluated organizational culture of educational-treatment hospitals in Kerman based on Denison Model and then examined its impact on knowledge management. Given the importance of this subject, the present research examined the impact of components of organizational culture on knowledge management in educational-treatment hospitals in Kerman.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This descriptive, cross-sectional and applied study was carried out in 2012 in educational-treatment hospitals of Kerman. The aim of this research is to examine the impact of components of organizational culture(including corporate culture, adaptability culture, adaptability culture admission culture) on knowledge management in educational-treatment hospitals of Kerman. Statistical universe included administrative and Para-clinical employees (N=780) of educational-treatment centers affiliated to Kerman University of Medical Science; of them,

258oneswere selected using random cluster sampling method. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Data was analyzed using anova, t-Test, Pearson correlation and SPSS statistical software.

To collect data, two questioners were used; to examine knowledge management, the model “building foundations of knowledge management” proposed by Proset et al [11] was used, and to examine organizational culture, the Daniel Denison’s organizational culture model was used[12].

Reliability coefficient of the organizational culture questionnaire was 0.92and reliability coefficient of the knowledge management questionnaire was 0.86. Since Cronbach's alpha was more than 0.7 in both questionnaires, both had suitable reliability. Validity of the organizational culture questionnaire and the knowledge management questionnaire was 82%, 81% respectively.

RESULTS

62.1% of subjects were female and the rest were male. Majority of the subjects were less than 30 (72.9%), while only 4.4% were more than 50 years old. Most subjects had bachelor’s degree (51.7%) and master’s degree was in the second rank; only 1.7% of subjects had PhD. Most of them had work record of less than 10 years, while others had , with a slight difference, work record of more than 20 years.

Table 1: if, regarding previous studies, 3.5 is considered the average limit of organizational culture in these hospitals and if higher figures are regarded as desirable condition and lower ones as poor condition, organizational culture in Kerman educational-treatment hospitals is generally 3.09 and is in good condition.

Table 1: descriptive indexes related to score of organizational culture

Variables	No.	Min.	Max.	Average	Standard deviation
Organizational culture	247	1/31	4/83	3/09	0/53
Collaboration culture	247	1/20	4/80	2/97	0/60
Compatibility culture	247	1/50	4/67	3/06	0/57
Adaptability culture	247	1	5	3/24	0/66
Mission culture	247	1	5	3/12	0/71

According to information mentioned in table 2, knowledge management was also in poor condition.

Table 2: descriptive indexes related to knowledge management

Variables	No.	Min.	Max.	Average	Standard deviation
Knowledge management	247	1/57	4/71	2/76	0/45
Knowledge objectives	247	1	5	2/95	0/74
Knowledge identification	247	1	4/76	2/92	0/65
Knowledge acquisition	247	1	5	2/52	0/76
Knowledge development	247	1	4/47	2/61	0/60
Knowledge sharing	247	1/25	4/75	2/94	0/43
Knowledge use	247	1	5	2/49	0/80
Knowledge maintenance	247	1	4/67	2/79	0/62
Knowledge evaluation	247	1	5	2/66	0/82

Correlation test

Null hypothesis: is there a linear relationship between knowledge management and organizational culture?

Table 3: Pearson correlation between knowledge management and organizational culture

Significant level and correlation coefficient	Studied variables
P= - 0.000 r=0.56	knowledge management organizational culture

Based on the information in the above table, there is a positive relationship between knowledge management and organizational culture; in fact, as organizational culture increases, knowledge management increases too

Null hypothesis: is there a linear relationship between knowledge management and components of organizational culture?

Table 3: Pearson correlation between knowledge management and components of organizational culture

components of organizational culture	Collaboration culture	compatibility culture	adaptability culture	mission culture
Knowledge management	P=-0.000 r=0.59	P=-0.000 r=0.42	P=-0.000 r=0.39	P=-0.000 r=0.47

Table 4 shows that, in 5% level, there is a positive relationship between components of organizational culture and knowledge management in Kerman educational-treatment hospitals. Indeed, all components have a positive effect on knowledge management, i.e. as every component increases, knowledge management increases too.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The majority of subjects mentioned that status of the organizational culture was medium. The highest score was related to adaptability and the lowest to collaboration. According to respondents, knowledge management was also in poor condition. According to the results of the present research, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between organizational culture and knowledge management; level of correlation coefficient reveals that this relationship is of direct kind, i.e. as organizational culture increases, knowledge management increases too. Moreover, all components of organizational cultural so affect knowledge management. In a study by Tabibi and Aghababa [2009], status of knowledge management was higher than average and was relatively desirable. Based on the results, paying attention to collaboration and knowledge creation seems essential. However, Knowledge management in Kerman educational-treatment hospitals is in poor condition. Thus, results of this research are inconsistent with Tabibi's results[6]. Results of a study carried out by Karami [2005] showed that personal autonomy and independence have an important role in the acquisition and development of knowledge. Since organizational culture is in good condition in Bahman Motor Center, it is suggested that useful cultural indexes affecting knowledge management must be kept and ineffective and undesirable indexes must be changed or corrected by changing organizational culture. Finally, organizational culture has a strong effective relationship with knowledge management; it is consistent with the results of this research [7]. Results of a study by Paulin and Mason [2002] revealed that obstacles of knowledge management are organizational culture, leadership and management performances. If an organization wants to enjoy organizational knowledge management, it must apply suitable managerial methods so that concepts of knowledge management are understood and get operational at organization level. One of its requirements is that knowledge management has a good reflection in organizational strategy. In addition, technological infrastructures must be provided so that employees can exchange their information, knowledge and experience through them. Therefore, according to this significant relationship, results of the present study are in agreement with the results of Paulin and Mason [8]. Research of Kandloal and Gooshchak [2003] in Australia showed that there was a direct relationship between application of IT and communications in these companies and level of knowledge sharing. The role of motivation and reward was also significant. If employees are praised for sharing their knowledge and information, they will do it again. As a result, organizational culture will be formed based on knowledge sharing . Given that there is significant relationship between organizational culture and knowledge management, the present study is in agreement with the study by Kandloal and Gooshchak[9]. In their study in Taiwan, Ming Fung La and Gugang Lee [2007]showed that organizational culture can be a major obstacle to obtain, keep and leverage knowledge asset. Type of available culture is critical to knowledge activities. Results of the study carried out by Ming Fung La and Gugang Lee indicate a significant relationship between organizational culture and knowledge management, so they match the results of the present study [10].

It has been tried in this research to examine the effect of components of organizational culture on knowledge management in Kerman educational-treatment hospitals; concerning the direct effect of these components on knowledge management, it can be concluded that organizational culture is a key factor in success of knowledge management. It is only through reviewing, changing and creating a suitable and flexible organizational culture that an interaction pattern can be gradually changed among people in an organization and that knowledge management can be employed as a competitive advantage. Proper and strategic planning will result in growth and improvement of treatment centers; it will lead to successful changes in hospitals and will help managers make a systematic prediction of change priorities and codify strategies to perform management techniques and processes successfully.

REFERENCES

- [1] Janz B, Prasadmanich P. 2003. Understanding the antecedents of effective knowledge management: the importance of a knowledge-centered culture. *Decision Sciences* 34(2): 351–384.
- [2] DeLong DW, Fahey L. 2000. Diagnosing cultural barriers to knowledge management. *Academy of Management Executive* 14(4): pp.113–12
- [3] Davenport, T.h.,Marchard, D., Is KM just good information management ,*Financial Times Mastering. Information Management Supplement* , *Financial Times*, London March 8th,pp.2-3,1999.
- [4] Gupta, B., Iyer , L.S.,and Aronson, J.E. ,2000. Knowledge Management: practices and challenges. *Industrial Management + Data Systems*, 100 (1),17-21.
- [5] Druker, P. *Post – Capitalist Society*. New York: Harper Business, 1993.
- [6] Tabibi, Seyedjamaladdin, Nasiripour, Amirashkan, Aghababa, Sara and NabipourJafarabad, Nasim (2011), studying the components of knowledge management in educational hospitals of Iran University of Medical Science. *Health Information Management Journal*, (4) 8, pp. 469-478
- [7] Karami, Mehdad (2005), Studying the relationship between organizational culture and establishing knowledge management in Bahman Automotive Group: BahmanKhodro Center. M.A thesis: Tehran University, Psychology and Disciplinary Science College.
- [8] Pauleen, D.& Mason, D. New Zealand knowledge management survey: barriers and drivers of knowledge management uptake. *Journal of knowledge management* 2002;8(5): 23-54.
- [9] Khandelwal, V.& Gottschal, P. A knowledge management survey of Australian law firms. *School of Computing and Information Technology* . University of western Study.2003
- [10] Fonglai, M. and Guanglee, G. (2007) Realationaships of organizational culture to ward knowledge activities. *process management journal*, vol, 13(2), 306_322.
- [11] probst G. Stephen R. Romhardt K. *ManagingKnowledge: Building Blocks for Success*.John Wiley & Sons, London 2000;30(3):45-67.
- [12] Denison, D.R. *Organizational Culture: can it be a keylever for driving organizational change?* International Institute for ManagementDevelopment,Denison@imd.Chapter2. 2000