

# **BARRIERS TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN IT SECTOR – A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELECTED COMPANIES IN TECHNOPARK**

## **Abstract**

Human Resources Management encompasses managing the knowledge of the employee. The current Human Resources Management (HRM) scenario is not only product centric but also knowledge centric. The organizations exactly need to create a good work environment that help to promote Knowledge Management (KM) eventually that results in enhanced knowledge acquisition and knowledge transfer. With effective and practical knowledge management, organizations can disseminate information and also acquire valuable information to improve the efficiency of their practices. Hence, it would be appropriate to study barriers to Knowledge Management Practices (KMP) in the context of IT Companies in Technopark.

**Keywords:** Human Resources Management, Knowledge Management and IT Sector.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Knowledge management practices is a process of making more efficient use of the available skills and knowledge of the employees in an organization. A knowledge intensive organization possesses many advantages like the ability of systematic problem solving, learning from past experiences and also the transformation of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. The knowledge management practices of an organization, if rightly practiced, can help to create a significant impact on development of human resources.

Knowledge management is the creation, distribution and utilization of knowledge at the individual, group, organizational and community level through harnessing of people, process and technology for the benefit of those involved and affected by it. So creation, storing and sharing of knowledge have assumed greater importance and are considered to be the crucial activities for the success of any organization.

It is imperative for any organization to clearly disseminate the reasons and expectations behind the implementation of knowledge management practices. The success of any organization or activity lies in making optimum use of available resources. The efficient utilization of manpower, technology can ease the process of knowledge management implementation. Thus resource utilization is found to be a key enabler for the knowledge management practices.

Hence, it would be appropriate to study the barriers of Knowledge Management (KM) and its relevance in the context of IT Companies in Technopark.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In order to give background for the present study, an attempt is made here to review briefly important studies.

Alavi and Leidner (1999) conducted a study about the knowledge management practices. Study specially mentioned about the outcomes and the nature of knowledge management systems followed by fifty organizations selected for the study. The study revealed that the culture and managerial level participation also affects the implementation of KM.

Fahimeh Babalhavaeji and Zahra Jafarzadeh Kermani (2001) studied about knowledge management and its sharing. The study revealed that attitude, intention and intrinsic rewards are the three major factors of knowledge sharing. Study also revealed that there is significant relationship between knowledge management and knowledge sharing.

Abdel Kader Daghfous (2003) conducted a study on knowledge management. He revealed that the availability of an appropriate reward system and IT backup would enable the employees to adopt knowledge management.

Minu Ipe (2003) examined the factors that influence the employee's attitudes towards knowledge sharing. Four major factors he identified are nature of knowledge, motivation, opportunities to share and culture.

Naresh Chandra Sahu (2006) studied the requirements to promote knowledge sharing. The study concluded that technology as well as employees' willingness affects the knowledge management practices in any organization.

### **III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The major challenge for the HRM today is the retention of the employees within an organization. Linking organizational goals with KM, developing human competencies, creating IT infrastructure and identifying the barriers of KM is considered to be the factors for the KM program of the organization. But many companies are failed to attempt these factors. Adoption of knowledge management is one of the breakthrough innovations and the Indian industry is considered to be in the infancy stage. Hence, it becomes necessary to assess the barriers to knowledge management.

### **IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The IT industry is predominantly knowledge driven and occupies a special role in the Indian industrial arena. With the competition from many countries, the Indian IT industry need to change for the success. The study about employee perception on knowledge management practices becomes inevitable in this sense. Knowledge management is treated as an instrument for the companies to retain the knowledge base of employees even if they quit.

### **V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Objectives of the present study is to assess the barriers to knowledge management practices in IT Companies in Technopark.

### **VI. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

There is no significant difference in the barriers to knowledge management practices from the perspectives of employees among software companies.

### **VII. METHODOLOGY**

The present study is both descriptive and analytical with the objective to examine the barriers to knowledge management practices. Present study is based on both secondary data and primary data. The Secondary data were collected from Journals, Books and Company Publications. Primary data was collected through questionnaire. A Questionnaire was developed for this purpose. A total of 50 employees were selected as respondents from the population of 145 workforce. Simple random sampling through lottery method is used for selecting sample respondents. The data collected for the study processed and analysed with the help of SPSS. For analysing quantitative data frequency and percentage is used. For testing hypothesis, t test, ANOVA and MANOVA is used.

### **VIII. UNITS SELECTED FOR THE STUDY**

Following sample units were selected for the study.

1. IBS Software Services Pvt Ltd.: It provides information technology software solution. IBS Software company also run on a real time B2B and B2C distribution platform. It is working with 90 employees.
2. Interland Technologies Pvt. Ltd. One of the leading Software company in Kerala. Software Development is the core function of the Company. It is working with 55 employees.

## IX. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A knowledge intensive organization possesses many advantages like the ability of systematic problem solving, learning from past experiences and also the transformation of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. But some of the barriers adversely affects the knowledge management programs of the organization. Hence, an attempt is made here to evaluate barriers to knowledge management practices.

**Table 1: Opinions Regarding Barriers to KMP**

Variables		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Lack of Methodology and Structure	No.	7	8	2	9	24	50
	%	14	16	4	18	48	100
Lack of documentation	No.	0	7	10	14	19	50
	%	0	14	20	28	38	100
Poor technical support	No.	0	0	5	5	40	50
	%	0	0	10	10	80	100
Lack of top management commitment	No.	3	3	2	7	35	50
	%	6	6	4	14	70	100
Poor financial resources	No.	11	5	11	8	15	50
	%	22	10	22	16	30	100
Inability to learn from past experience	No.	5	7	8	8	22	50
	%	10	14	16	16	44	100
Information overload	No.	5	5	6	16	18	50
	%	10	10	12	32	36	100
Language barriers	No.	3	2	8	8	29	50
	%	6	4	16	16	58	100
Ineffective communication strategies	No.	2	6	8	9	25	50
	%	4	12	16	18	50	100

(Source: Primary data)

From the above table it is cleared that 14 percent of respondents are strongly disagreed that lack of methodology and structure is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But another 16 percent of respondents are disagreed that lack of methodology and structure is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly, 4 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that lack of methodology and structure is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, 18 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of methodology and structure is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But 48 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of methodology and structure is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

It is clear from the above table that 14 percent of respondents are disagreed that lack of documentation is predominant barrier to knowledge management practices. Similarly, 20 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that lack of documentation is the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, 28 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of documentation is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly, 38 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of documentation is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

It is cleared that 10 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that lack of technological support is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, another 10 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of technological support is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly 80 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of technological support is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

It is understood from the study that 6 percent of respondents are strongly disagreed that lack of top management commitment is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But another 6 percent of respondents are disagreed that lack of top management commitment is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But only 4 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that lack of top management commitment is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, 14 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of top management commitment is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly 70 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that lack of top management commitment is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

From the above table it is cleared that 22 percent of respondents are strongly disagreed that poor financial resources is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But 10 percent of respondents are disagreed that poor financial resources is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly, another 22 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that poor financial resources are one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, 16 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that poor financial resources are one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Finally 30 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that poor financial resources are one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

It is clear from the study that 10 percent of respondents are strongly disagreed that inability to learn from past experience is one of the barriers to knowledge management

practices. But 14 percent of respondents are disagreed that inability to learn from past experience is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly, 16 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that inability to learn from past experience is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Another 16 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that inability to learn from past experience is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But 44 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that inability to learn from past experience is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

Above table shows that 10 percent of respondents are strongly disagreed that information overload is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Another 10 percent of respondents are disagreed that information overload is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly, 12 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that information overload is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But 32 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that information overload is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, 36 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that information overload is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

It is found from the above table that 6 percent of respondents are strongly disagreed that language barrier is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Only 4 percent of respondents are disagreed that language barrier is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly, 16 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that language barrier is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Another 16 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that language barrier is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, 58 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that language barrier is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

It is clear from the above table that only 4 percent of respondents are strongly disagreed that ineffective communication strategy is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But 12 percent of respondents are disagreed that ineffective communication strategy is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Similarly, 16 per cent of respondents are neither agreed nor disagreed that ineffective communication strategy is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. But 18 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that ineffective communication strategy is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices. Likewise, 50 percent of respondents are strongly agreed that ineffective communication strategy is one of the barriers to knowledge management practices.

**Table 2: Opinion wise Variations about Barriers to KMP with Test of Significance**

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Lack of Methodology and Structure	3.56	1.55	16.20	0.00
Lack of documentation	2.86	1.74	11.64	0.00
Poor technical support	4.70	0.65	51.38	0.00

Lack of top management commitment	4.36	1.19	25.88	0.00
Poor financial resources	3.06	1.43	15.08	0.00
Inability to learn from past experience	3.52	1.55	16.01	0.00
Information overload	3.50	1.36	18.21	0.00
Language barriers	4.16	1.20	24.49	0.00
Ineffective communication strategies	3.74	1.56	16.93	0.00

(Source: Primary data)

It is observed from the above table that majority of the respondents opined that poor technical support (Mean value: 4.70) is the main barrier to KMP. This is followed by lack of top management commitment (Mean value: 4.36), language barrier (Mean value: 4.16), ineffective communication strategies (Mean value: 3.74), Lack of methodology and structure (Mean value: 3.56), inability to learn from past experience (Mean Value: 3.3.52), information overload (Mean Value: 3.50), poor financial resources (Mean Value: 3.06) and lack of documentation (Mean Value:2.86). Opinion wise variation in respect to all variables are below 0.05 the level of significance. That shows that there is significant difference in the opinion wise variations regarding barriers to knowledge management practices among employees.

**Table 3: Company wise Variation Regarding Barriers to KMP with Test of Significance**

Variables	ANOVA	
	F	Sig.
Lack of Methodology and Structure	10.551	0.000
Lack of documentation	20.736	0.000
Poor technical support	49.427	0.000
Lack of top management commitment	61.807	0.000
Poor financial resources	17.531	0.000
Inability to learn from past experience	3.878	0.022
Information overload	17.848	0.000
Language barriers	40.567	0.000
Ineffective communication strategies	16.279	0.000

(Source: Primary data)

From the result of one way ANOVA it is clear that there is significant difference in all the variables of barriers to knowledge management practices from the perspectives of employees among software companies as the significant level of P Value is less than 0.05.

## **X. TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS**

In order to evaluate company wise variations about the barriers to knowledge management practices from employees perspective, ANOVA test was conducted. The study revealed that company wise variation in respect to all variables relating to barriers to knowledge management practices from employees perspective are below 0.05 the level of significance. Hence, the study reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the barriers to knowledge management practices from the perspectives of employees among software companies and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is significant difference in the barriers to knowledge management practices from the perspectives of employees among software companies.

## **XI. CONCLUSION**

Knowledge management is the creation, distribution and utilization of knowledge at the individual, group, organizational and community level through harnessing of people, process and technology for the benefit of those involved and affected by it. Result revealed that that poor technical support is the main barrier to KMP. This is followed by lack of top management commitment, language barrier, ineffective communication strategies, Lack of methodology and structure, inability to learn from past experience, information overload, poor financial resources and lack of documentation. Opinion wise variation in respect to all variables are below 0.05 the level of significance when t test is applied. That shows that there is significant difference in the opinion wise variations regarding barriers to knowledge management practices among employees. Similarly, in order to evaluate company wise variations about the barriers to knowledge management practices from employees perspective, ANOVA test was conducted. The study revealed that company wise variation in respect to all variables relating to barriers to knowledge management practices from employees perspective are below 0.05 the level of significance. That shows that there is significant difference in the barriers to knowledge management practices from the perspectives of employees among software companies.

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