
Knowledge Management; One of the Requirements in Today's Organizations

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Abstract

Due to the globalization, the world today has gone through rapid and inevitable changes. Accordingly, the organizations have bound themselves to apply a novel style of management entitled "knowledge management" in order to be able to address these changes and guarantee their survival and growth. The objective in this research is to study knowledge management in Iranian organizations. The research method in this research is descriptive-analytic and the data collection instrument is researcher-made notes. Results suggested that the speed of changes and advancement in technology is extremely higher than the time needed for training specialists, holding training courses and human resources development. Not only technology changes with a high speed, but also, the products, production lines and regulations follow the same trend. Accordingly, the acceleration of knowledge production and its publication have been focused on. Iranian organizations are not an exception to this rule and more or less deal with similar issues like other organizations in other countries. Also, Iranian organizations are affected by these complicated and uncontrollable changes due to being located in the strategic region of Middle East and presence of various ethnicities, languages and cultures. Hence, knowledge and its management should be considered thoroughly in order to deal with these changes.

Key Words: knowledge, information, knowledge management, Iranian organizations

Introduction

Due to the globalization, the world today has gone through rapid and inevitable changes; changes that Toffler refer to as future shock [1]. In today's world, organizations are increasingly dealing with dynamic and changing environment. Hence, in order to survive and grow, they have to adapt with the environmental changes. In other words, considering the accelerated pace of scientific, technologic, social and cultural changes and developments in today's world, organizations are considered successful and efficient which in addition to coordinating with the changes in today's society, can predict the changes path in the future and be able to direct these changes in the path of desirable changes for creating a better

future [2]. Management scholars and theorists unanimously believe that attaining competitive advantage is the only index which shows the superiority of an organization over other organizations, and considering the current changing and complex situation, organizations could guarantee their survival that offer between products and services, comparing to their competitors and add to their competitive advantage through this and show their supremacy over other organizations. Today, this supremacy is reachable through knowledge and knowledge management [3].

Today, economy is moving towards knowledge-based economy and it has challenged the current equations of the countries, which in turn is a product of information and communication technology. Current organizations pay more attention to understanding, adaptability and management of changes in the surrounding environment and they have overtaken in acquiring and applying up-to-date knowledge and information in order to improve the operations and provide more desirable products and services to their clients. Such organizations require applying a novel style of management, entitled "knowledge management"[4].

Method

In this research for the data collection and the formulation of theoretical foundations related to the subject of research and review of research methods of library records and tools download Jack used.

Therefore the order of the books and articles available in libraries and Latin articles available on the Web sites related to the subject of the investigation, were used, the information on the receipt for the record and in the end the job information collected is collected.

Knowledge Management Success Factors

Harry Han expresses that based on his experiences and also the case studies on knowledge management in the world, the main factors which are vital for knowledge management success could be categorized in four groups.

These four groups include: Individuals, Processes, Technology and Continuous Strategic Commitment. A group of researchers believe that the abovementioned factors could be divided into two classes: Technology and Processes in one class, and Individuals and Continuous Strategic Commitment in another [2].

1. Technology: Knowledge management technologies solutions provide a foundation for supporting and sharing knowledge, cooperation, workflow and document management [1]. These tools create an environment as the central source, in which, personnel, customers, partners and suppliers could exchange information and guide each other and make better decisions, ultimately. The most famous knowledge management technology problem is the knowledge inputs such as: The Internet, Intranet and Extranet. Some of these technologies are public, such as Microsoft Standard or Lotus Notes databases and some of them are specialized tools such as: Business intelligence and Document management[5].

2. Processes: Processes include standard processes for granting knowledge, content management (acceptance, content, maintaining quality, maintaining current content, achieving or removing outdated content). It is necessary for the processes to be simple and clear to be completely understood and used by all organization personnel [6].

3. Individuals: The most significant challenge in knowledge management is to ensure the participation of members in sharing knowledge, cooperation and reuse of knowledge for results. This important issue should accompany a change in organizational culture and a culture should govern the organization which prevents hoarding knowledge and creates an environment of intimacy and trust. In order to reach this goal, it is necessary to consider the motivations of the individuals. For this purpose, resetting the rewarding and performance assessment systems and other systems should be considered[7].

4. Continuous Strategic Commitment: Strategic management has a key role in improving the desirable behavior through continuous patterns and communication. A necessary principle for knowledge management success is to create continuous strategic commitment towards knowledge management among organization top and senior managers. Studies show that knowledge management innovation in some organizations failed since they had assumed knowledge management a short-term process and had diverted their focus off the next big wave. Organizations can use the following factors as a success guide for application of knowledge management innovation:

5. Presence of Knowledge Leaders or Heroes: Knowledge leader is a person who actively creates knowledge plans and pushes forward. Creating a

culture which encourages innovating, learning and sharing knowledge – accelerates learning and transferring knowledge – creating a mutual understanding of the organization objectives – presence of a clear plan which shows the relationship between knowledge and its interests – attractive and interesting insights – proper technologic infrastructures – making information, knowledge and meta-knowledge accessible to personnel in order to carry out a qualitative work and realization of service paradigm [8].

Knowledge Management in Iran

The records of implementation of knowledge management in Iranian organizations date back to ca. 2005. However, there has been some experiences carried out related to knowledge management processes in some organizations and generally under supervision of human resources and researches units which have not drawn any attention to themselves due to the lack of specific targeting and being based on a general grasp of knowledge management concepts. But in 2005, organizations, which tried to find solutions for extracting knowledge of their experts, in the first place and subsequently, sharing the organizational knowledge among their members, emerged. Among them could be referred to the originations in oil, gas and petrochemicals as the pioneers. Subsequently, universities, banks, larger industries and other public sectors made efforts in this regard [9]. Today, most large organizations have come to understand that they will be successful due to their human resources skills and experiences and not due to the physical and mechanical systems, and if they cannot improve the scientific and professional level of their human resources in the organization, they most definitely will be removed from global market [10]. Considering the fact that competition is a major issue in private originations, knowledge management has gained a lot of attention as the main factor in reaching supremacy. However, in public sector, considering the fact the competition is meaningless, knowledge management has not been considered thoroughly.

Considering the advancements in governmental organizations in other countries and the international relations between the organizations in the world, which is also considered as trade and communication globalization, organizations in Iran are led to move towards knowledge-based organizations. University and scientific researches carried out on governmental organizations in which knowledge management is institutionalized, show a successful performance with a high turnover for the organizations [11]. The name of some of the organizations in which knowledge management is carried out, along with their knowledge management system are presented in the following:

National Petrochemical Industries Company (MTAShare 4.2)

One of the main concerns in this company has been the exit of key individuals, generally due to retirement or the transfer of personnel to the privatized petrochemical companies or other sectors of Oil Ministry. Due to this trend, the company is deprived of the knowledge hidden in the minds of these experts who had emerged in the petrochemical industry and as a result, errors will happen again and successes will not be regenerated.

Razi Petrochemical Company (MTAShare 4.0)

The oldest petrochemical complex in Iran has always experienced the transfer of experts who shared their knowledge to the new generations. Development of activities and renewal of technologies and the high cost of errors led this company to find solutions for directing its knowledge management processes. Benefitting from consultation and companionship of the company since 2007, Razi Petrochemical Company has implemented a comprehensive plan in knowledge management. By the establishment of knowledge management in the company, the knowledge of the personnel was recorded and shared, the knowledge management structure was formed and MTA Share software was welcomed and used by the personnel. Considering the successful implementation of knowledge management, Razi Petrochemical Company was rewarded the National Knowledge Management Award trophy for two times. By understanding the advantages of knowledge management, development and institutionalization, company managers made the knowledge management in company processes an agenda for the company.

Khuzestan Steel Company (MTAShare 3.2)

Khuzestan Steel Company owes a major part of its strength to the high technical and empirical knowledge of its personnel and experts. Continuous access to the new technologies and technical and managerial experimental knowledge of administrating various sectors of Khuzestan Steel Company has caused this company to begin a comprehensive knowledge management plan since 2009. The company benefitted from the help of consultants from Munich university in Germany.

Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Company (MTAShare 3.2)

Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Company (HESA) which was established in 1975 is the first aircraft manufacturing company and the most famous company in aviation industry in Iran. Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Company carried out its knowledge management activities in 2010.

Islamic Republic of Iran Army (MTAShare 3.2)

Managing defense knowledge and implementation of knowledge management in the areas of defense and army have always been emphasized by the experts in this field. Islamic Republic of Iran Army, as the best and most advanced military and defense force in the region has selected the implementation of knowledge management as a solution to make its technical, managerial and defensive power more efficient and in this regard, has begun the plan of selling and localizing the knowledge management software in Pilot of AJA (AJA Joint Chiefs of Staff) in the form of a 7-month project in 2011 .

Despite the obvious significance of knowledge management and paying attention to this issue by some Iranian organizations, there is no statistics presented from these organizations in regards with the success in implementation of knowledge management system, and this could be attributed to the following reasons:

- Lack of a target-oriented movement and an accurate planning for extracting the knowledge of organization experts and unfirming this knowledge and creating a comprehensive knowledge
- Lack of determining the parts of the organization which require knowledge extraction and lack of enough supervision and control on consultants of knowledge management system implementation [13].
- Directing interviews with organization experts in short hours when they are engaged with their business concerns, which has caused the obtained knowledge look similar to superficial memories
- Lack of proper justification of the experts and dedicating not enough time to them for thinking about the useful knowledge which they have obtained during years
- Lack of proper cultural infrastructures for knowledge management
- Employing consultants who are not familiar with the organization and its objectives which has led the experts to be incapable of delivering proper information [14].

Discussion and Conclusion

Human knowledge doubles every 33 years. However, the human intellectual capacity doubles every 1.5-3 million years. Also, organizations have not been deprived of knowledge accumulation, so that the volume of the information in organizations and the necessity of using them in organizational decisions in the past couple of decades has led to emergence of phenomenon called knowledge management. This show the necessity of organizing, planning and refining the organizational knowledge along with the management of the process of accessing correct knowledge so that it is efficient and effective. In

today's era of knowledge, organizations have come to this understanding that they will not survive unless they have a strategy for managing and valuating their organizational knowledge. Hence, there have been strategies and cycles proposed for implementation of knowledge management. Considering the occurred changes in the world, the attention of the managers and management theorists is directed towards the organizations intellectual properties. Knowledge management assists with the publication learning and innovation of modern knowledge. Today, knowledge is the most important property and the most significant competitive advantage of many organizations. In the meanwhile, in today's changing organizations, the largest and most complex problem is to collect, store, recycle, search, distribute and retrieve knowledge. Exploiting knowledge and intellectual properties is a subject which has gained a lot of attention from the scientists. In fact, organizations use knowledge management in order to reach goals such as: Organizational growth, improving quality, increasing efficacy, profitability and preventing the waste of knowledge due to the retirements and personnel transfers.

Iranian organizations are not an exception to this rule and more or less deal with similar issues like other organizations in other countries. Also, Iranian organizations are affected by these complicated and uncontrollable changes due to being located in the strategic region of Middle East and presence of various ethnicities, languages and cultures. Hence, knowledge and its management should be considered thoroughly in order to deal with these changes. On the other hand, in the 20-year Outlook of Iran the significance of benefitting from advanced knowledge, capability of producing science and technology, by relying on the huge share of human resources and social capitals in national production are directly addressed and they will not be reached without knowledge management. Generally said, knowledge management is organization of knowledge; that is the effort to obtain the required management, sharing the information in one organization and emphasis on the improvement of organizational memory in order to improve the decision-making process, increase in production and improvement in product quality. Hence, the need to use it for the survival and growth of Iranian organizations and reaching the 20-year Outlook of Iran is necessary, which is reached by removing issues and problems faced in knowledge management, and implementation of knowledge management system in public and private organizations.

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