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Practices and Challenges of Knowledge Sharing at Ethiopian Management Institute

Project Course (MS-100)

By:- Bette Mekonnen Tekleab

Enrolment No: ID1116602

Submitted to:- The Coordinator (Projects) School

Of Management Studies, IGNOU,

Maidan, Garhi, New Delhi – 110068

Advisor: Mr. Shoa Jemal (Asst. Professor)

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will deal with the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study, and organization of the study. So, details are described as follows.

1.1.Background of the Study

Organizations have started to realize that knowledge sharing as one of the main components of knowledge management which can give them a competitive edge by leading to accelerated learning and innovation. Creating systematic ways to share existing organizational knowledge is the primary business imperative because organization's knowledge is ripe for sharing, as long as they have the proper environment and incentive to do so. The greatest challenge for the manager of intellectual capital is to create an organization that can share the knowledge.

Another important aspect of knowledge sharing is knowledge grows when it is shared, as one shares knowledge with other units, not only those units gain information but also they share it with others and feedback questions, amplifications, and modifications that add further value for the original sender creating exponential growth. Unlike material assets, knowledge assets increase with use.

The common attitude of most people is to hold on to one's knowledge since it is what makes him/her an asset to the organization. Today, knowledge is still considered as power, an enormous power in fact, but the understanding has changed considerably, particularly from the perspective of organizations. The new paradigm is that within the organization knowledge must be shared in order for it to grow. It has been shown that the organization that shares knowledge among its management and staff grows stronger and becomes more competitive. This is the core of knowledge management – the sharing of knowledge.

To use this opportunity many organizations are crafting mechanisms to design and implement knowledge sharing projects. Realizing this reality, and understanding the importance of knowledge management in general and knowledge sharing in particular the Ethiopian management institute is using many mechanisms. One of the mechanisms is team up its consultants in many of its management development activities (projects), assigning consultants to different works in its own department in order to help the department and gain practical knowledge from them, etc. This includes assigning consultants in different teams in training, consultancy, research projects and other different jobs. However, this mechanism is not properly structured and systematically led.

The Ethiopian Management Institute is a government organization established before sixty years under the umbrella of different names working in the areas of management related training, consultancy and research. Currently, it is working towards its vision which is *"to be a world class management development center by 2020 that enables client organizations to provide efficient and effective services"*.

The mission of the institute is *"to enable civil and public service and other institutions to provide sustained, efficient and effective services by rendering state of the art training, research and consultancy services"*. To realize its vision and mission the institute tried to underpin its values which are; *committed for quality, customer focused, people first, continual learning, team work for effectiveness and economy* as its values (Ethiopian Management Institute strategic Plan, 2016).

The realization of the Vision and Mission needs to use appropriate methods which will help the institute to be at a competitive edge. One of the mechanisms is capacitate the consultants and other employees by devising and using appropriate method for the process. This includes managing knowledge in the organization which primarily includes knowledge sharing.

Therefore, understanding the importance of assessing the situation of knowledge sharing, identify best practices and challenges is very important to use knowledge sharing as a way of developing organizational capability.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

Knowledge Management is one of the management philosophies that has enabled organizations to create, store, share and use knowledge to realize their objectives.

In the case of Ethiopian Management Institute, there is diverse perception and understanding on the benefits and methods of knowledge sharing among the management, consultants and other employees. Besides, managers and employees don't know the proper conditions for knowledge sharing, which results in weak

knowledge sharing. There is also a gap in understanding the specific factors which affect the knowledge sharing in the institute and the suitable techniques to properly apply knowledge sharing. As a result there is no structured way of sharing knowledge. It all depends on individual's willingness and informal mechanism which reveals the lack of institutional systems and ways (Ethiopian Management Institute, 2011).

So, the perceptions of the consultants in Ethiopian Management Institute with respect to knowledge sharing, the practices and the challenges have to be surveyed so as to understand and describe the nature and the key methods of facilitating knowledge sharing at the institute.

1.3. Research Questions

This research will be provide possible answer for questions related to practices and challenges of knowledge sharing in Ethiopian Management Institute (EMI) among individuals (management teams, consultants and other employees) and its own departments. The questions are described as follows:-

1. What is the opinion of leaders, consultants and other employees towards knowledge and knowledge sharing?

2. How does the knowledge, skills and attitudes shared among individuals (management teams, consultants and other employees) and its own department's members?

3. What are the challenges observed so far in the process of knowledge sharing?

4. What are the sources of such challenges?

5. What will be the possible solutions for the challenges?

1.4. Research Objectives

1.4.1. General Objectives

The main objective of the study will be to examine the practices and challenges of knowledge sharing in Ethiopian Management Institute (EMI), and propose possible solutions to manage the challenge.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are described as follows:

- To understand the perception of leaders, consultants and other employees on knowledge management and knowledge sharing.
- To recognize the mechanisms used to share knowledge at the institute
- To identify factors affecting knowledge sharing at the institute.
- To realize the sources of challenges which are affecting knowledge sharing.
- To recommend possible solutions for the challenges.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This research has much importance for the institute, the researcher and other organizations. The general importance of the research is; it helps the institute to know its challenges in the areas of knowledge sharing and devise appropriate mechanism for solving the challenge. Other main significances of the study will be described as follows:-

- It will enable the institute to design appropriate policies, procedures, and mechanisms for the proper use and implementation of knowledge sharing.
- It will benefit the management in that it will clearly show the status of knowledge sharing at the institute, the challenges as well as the mechanisms to manage the challenges.

- It will benefit Institute in which the research output indicates how best knowledge can be shared among individual members of the institute and its department as well as to manage the effects of knowledge sharing.

- It will benefit regional management development institutes, in which the result of the research can be used by them.

- It will benefit other researchers in that it can be used as a base for further research.

1.6. Scope of the Study

This research is focused on Ethiopian management Institute five main departments (management development department, human resource management department, procurement and property management department, budget and finance department and facility management department) in order to understand the real practices and challenges of knowledge management and knowledge sharing.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

During data collection, the leaders, consultants and other employees may not provide real and appropriate information due to various reasons. In addition, many of the respondents may not respond the requested information on time. Hence, this may have impact on the quality of the research and its recommendation.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study will be presented in five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction consist of background information, problem statement, the research

objective, the research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and constraints of the study. The second chapter presents the literature review consisting of related literature and the conceptual framework. The third chapter deals with the research methodology. The fourth chapter is about data analysis and interpretation. And the final chapter deals with summary, conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In order to assess the perception, practice and challenges of knowledge sharing at Ethiopian Management Institute it is important to understand the issues related to knowledge management and knowledge sharing. For this purpose this chapter focuses on discussing relevant literature in the area of knowledge management and knowledge sharing. Hence, relevant literature on knowledge management and knowledge sharing are discussed hereunder thoroughly.

2.1. Knowledge and Knowledge Management

Drastic changes in the global economic era significantly change the world economic perspectives. The advent of the information and communication technology (ICT) and the information revolution totally changed the way information is being processed, managed and used. In the present knowledge era, the main attention and attraction is on the knowledge that would make people, the customers, clienteles or patrons feel good, satisfied and contented at all times. These changes transformed the way organizations behave and react. The situation demands for optimum treatment of innovation and creativity in organizational operations. Drucker (2001) proclaimed that land, labor and capital are no longer valuable in comparison to knowledge. Organization needs to emphasize on adding competitive value to their products and services. This is only achievable through the application of direct human expertise that is knowledge.

The importance of knowledge for development gained global attention in the late 1990s. In efforts to identify the explanatory factors of development, attention was cast toward

knowledge as a major factor accounting for the difference of outcomes in economic growth between states that have successfully developed and those that have failed to do so. In following years, knowledge was recognized as a key ingredient for successful development by various development actors. For instance, in the World Development Report 1998-99, the World Bank stated that "knowledge, not capital, is the key to sustained economic growth and improvements in human well-being." As a result of such development, knowledge sharing is now increasingly viewed as an essential element for successful and effective development cooperation by many individual states and international institutions, which have in various forms integrated knowledge sharing in their development cooperation efforts.

Organizations are starting to understand and appreciate knowledge as the most valued asset in the emerging competitive environment (Bailey & Clarke 2000；Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995). Davenport and Prusak (1997) defined knowledge enterprise from the primary activities involved. They identified activities such as acquisition, creation, packaging or application of knowledge. The objective of Knowledge Management (KM) is to improve the quality of the contributions people make to their organizations by helping people to make sense of the context within which the organization exists, to take responsibility, to cooperate and share what they know and learn, and to effectively challenge, negotiate and learn from others. Organizations have the potential to learn and that new knowledge may be effectively incorporated into specific practices, so that the knowledge is accessible when needed. Understanding knowledge and aspects associated with it is very important to properly use knowledge for organizational development and success.

Knowledge management (KM) can be defined as the creation and maintenance of a work and learning environment that 'fosters the continuous creation, aggregation, use and re-use of both personal and organizational knowledge in the pursuit of new business value' (Xerox 2001).

Knowledge includes both explicit knowledge which is knowledge that can be expressed by formal and systematic language and shared in the form of data, scientific formulae, specifications, manuals and often recorded in hardcopy or electronic documentation of some kind. This type of knowledge can be processed, transmitted and stored relatively easily. And tacit knowledge, which is mostly explained by Michael Polany's most quoted sentence '*we know more than we can tell*' (Prusak, 136), is highly personal and hard to formalize. It includes subjective insights, intuitions and hunches. Tacit knowledge is deeply rooted in actions, procedures, routines commitment, ideas, values and emotion.

In addition, explicit knowledge without tacit insights quickly loses its meaning. In addition, for tacit knowledge to be communicated and shared it has to be converted in to words or numbers that one can understand. Knowledge is created through interactions between tacit and explicit knowledge rather than from tacit or explicit knowledge alone

Much of the contemporary interest in KM derives, of course, from the recognition of the increasing business value of effective and efficient management of the key resource possessed by most organizations – organizational knowledge. The challenge for organizations and their managers is to move from a situation where mission critical knowledge is 'locked up' in the minds of key personnel to one where it is recognized and

rewarded as an organizational resource, available and accessible to all members of the organization.

Management development institutes, like most organizations, should learn and gain knowledge so as to improve decision making and innovation especially in the age of increased external and internal pressures for change and improvement. Knowledge management can be used as a strategy by management development institutes to improve competitive performance. Zhao (2010) points out that management development institutes knowledge management can facilitate acquisition, sharing and application of trainers, consultants and researchers knowledge so as to better manage and apply their organizations tangible and intangible knowledge assets, especially the professional knowledge, experiences and competencies of trainers, consultants and researchers.

2.2. Knowledge Sharing

According to Ohmae (2005) the global economy has its own dynamic and logic - the key emphasis, its success and survival is on learning. Cong and Pandya (2003) affirmed the new economy not only poses challenges, but also offers opportunities for the public sectors to take active initiatives to adopt new management tools, techniques and philosophies. It is not simply about product competitive advantages, or return on investment, but more towards policy decisions and delivery of services. It is also about information provision and knowledge indication, sharing and utilization. Knowledge and intellectual capital determine competitiveness and play key roles in fostering a culture that promotes information and knowledge sharing in organization. Trends in the current global economies warrant knowledge and intellectual capital to determine competitiveness. The public and private sectors play crucial roles in ensuring

technological literacy among employees as well as fostering a culture that promotes information and knowledge sharing.

Knowledge sharing is a critical component of knowledge management. Knowledge management is generally referred to as the way an organization creates, retains and shares knowledge. Knowledge sharing is the process by which individuals exchange tacit and explicit knowledge in order to create new knowledge (Van den Hooff& De Ridder, 2004). Knowledge sharing can occur between individuals, within teams and across the organization. Research supports the idea that cognitive resources available within a team will be underutilized if knowledge is not shared (Argote, 1999). Therefore knowledge sharing is a critical team process that involves members interacting to share ideas, information, and suggestions relevant to the team's task at hand (Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006)

An organization's capacity to share knowledge among its individuals and teams and apply that shared knowledge to performing important activities is increasingly seen as a vital source of competitive advantage in many industries (e.g., Dierickx& Cool, 1989; Grant, 1996; Kogut& Zander, 1992; Nonaka& Takeuchi, 1995; Teece, Pisano &Shuen, 1997). Building on this premise, scholars have examined the difficulties involved in keeping the organization's knowledge within its boundaries (e.g., Brown &Duguid, 2000; Liebeskind, 1997), as well as the challenges of sharing knowledge across boundaries between organizations (e.g., Helper, MacDuffie&Sabel, 2000;Inkpen&Dinur, 1998). Organizations also face significant problems in sharing knowledge internally, however, including search costs and barriers to transfer that operate at the individual, group, and organization levels (e.g., Gupta &Govindarajan, 2000; Reagans &McEvily, 2003; Schulz,

2003; Szulanski, 1996; Zander &Kogut, 1995). If knowledge sharing involves costs and barriers as well as benefits, obtaining and using knowledge from other parts of the organization does not necessarily improve the performance of task units within the organization (Haas & Hansen, 2005). Because more knowledge sharing is no guarantee of improved performance, scholars need to move beyond studying facilitators of knowledge sharing to examine how organization's knowledge resources are utilized by task units to improve their performance.

2.3. Benefits of Knowledge Sharing

If properly implemented using the appropriate ways for the specific situation and the type of an organization, it has many benefits. The main benefits of effective knowledge sharing are explained as follows (Nonaka& Takeuchi 1995). Davenport and Prusak ,1997):-

Enabling better and faster decision making:- By delivering relevant information at the time of need through structure, search, subscription, syndication, and support, a knowledge management environment can provide the basis for making good decisions. Collaboration brings the power of large numbers, diverse opinions, and varied experience to bear when decisions need to be made. The reuse of knowledge in repositories allows decisions be based on actual experience, large sample sizes, and practical lessons learned.

Making it easy to find relevant information and resources :-When faced with a need to respond to a customer, solve a problem, analyze trends, assess markets, benchmark against peers, understand competition, create new offerings, plan strategy, and to think critically, organizations are typically look for information and resources to support these

activities. If it is easy and fast to find what they need when they need it, they can perform all of these tasks efficiently.

Reusing ideas, documents, and expertise:-Once organizations have developed an effective process, they want to ensure that others use the process each time a similar requirement arises. If someone has written a document or created a presentation which addresses a recurring need, it should be used in all future similar situations. When members of organization have figured out how to solve a common problem, know how to deliver a recurring service, or have invented a new product, you want that same solution, service, and product to be replicated as much as possible. Just as the recycling of materials is good for the environment, reuse is good for organizations because it minimizes rework, prevents problems, saves time, and accelerates progress.

Avoiding redundant effort:-No one likes to spend time doing something over again. But they do so all the time for a variety of reasons. Avoiding duplication of effort saves time and money, keeps employee morale up, and streamlines work. By not spending time reinventing the wheel, you can have more time to invent something new.

Avoiding making the same mistakes twice:-George Santayana said, "Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it." If we don't learn from our mistakes, we will experience them over and over again. Knowledge management allows us to share lessons learned, not only about successes, but also about failures. In order to do so, we must have a culture of trust, openness, and reward for willingness to talk about what we have done wrong.

Taking advantage of existing expertise and experience:-Teams benefit from the individual skills and knowledge of each member. The more complementary the expertise of the team members, the greater the power of the team. Organizations have people with widely-varying capabilities and backgrounds, and there should be a benefit from this.

Promoting standard, repeatable processes and procedures:-If standard processes and procedures have been defined, they should always be followed. This allows employees to learn how things are done, leads to predictable and high-quality results, and enables large organizations to be consistent in how work is performed. By providing a process for creating, storing, communicating, and using standard processes and procedures, employees will be able to use them routinely.

Providing methods, tools, templates, techniques, and examples:-Methods, tools, templates, techniques, and examples are the building blocks supporting repeatable processes and procedures. Using these consistently streamlines work, improves quality, and ensures compatibility across the organization.

Making scarce expertise widely available:-If there is a resource who is in great demand due to having a skill which is in short supply, knowledge management can help make that resource available to the entire organization. Ways of doing so include community discussion forums, training events, ask the expert systems, recorded presentations, white papers, broadcast, and blogs.

Showing customers how knowledge is used for their benefit:-In competitive situations, it is important to be able to differentiate yourself from other organizations. Demonstrating to potential and current customers that you have widespread expertise and

have ways of bringing it to bear for their benefit can help convince them to start or continue doing business with you. Conversely, failure to do so could leave you vulnerable to competitors who can demonstrate their knowledge management capabilities and benefits.

Accelerating delivery to customers:-Speed of execution is another important differentiator among competitors. All other things being equal, the organization which can deliver sooner will win. Knowledge sharing, reuse and innovation can significantly reduce time to deliver a proposal, product, or service to a customer. And that translates into increased win rates, add-on business, and new customers.

Enabling the organization to leverage its size:-As an organization grows, the increasing size is only a benefit if it can use the knowledge of all of its employees. Through the use of tools such as communities, expertise locators, and repositories, the full power of a large enterprise can be exploited.

Making the organization's best problem-solving experiences reusable:-Consistently applying proven practices, also known as best practices or good practices, can significantly improve the results of any organization. By establishing a process for defining, communicating, and replicating proven practices, an enterprise takes advantage of what it learns about solving problems.

Stimulating innovation and growth:-Most businesses want to increase their revenues, but it becomes increasingly difficult as industries mature and competition increases. Creating new knowledge through effective knowledge sharing, collaboration, and information delivery can stimulate innovation..

Develop organizational culture:- achieving cultural benefits such as enhanced pride, organizational morale, team ethos and sense of tradition. Institutionally, this meant maintaining continuity and preventing loss of organizational knowledge, sustaining the organizations and their reputations

2.4. Barriers to Effective Knowledge Sharing

Literature on knowledge sharing identified numerous barriers that impede the effective exchange of knowledge (O'Dell & Grayson, 1998; Hazel Hall, 2002a; Martin, 2003; Truch, 2001, Lancaster, 2003; Huysman, 2003; Hendriks, 2004). The main ones include:-

- Individuals' dispositional impediments, often translating into action or lack of action, such as people not knowing what they know, what knowledge might be helpful for others, or what knowledge exists; people considering that knowledge does not apply to them; people withholding information, 'bad news' knowledge or intellectual property

- Employees may not share what they know with others due to insufficient understanding of the benefits of doing so, or because they somehow cannot manage to integrate such tasks into their everyday duties.

- Management practices, such as locking up tacit knowledge, denying time to engage in sharing, or failing to implement knowledge once it is shared, limiting relationships or extending 'distances' between knowledge exchange partners.

- Organizational structures, such as multi-layered structures that impede knowledge flow, trapping of knowledge in closed groups and work teams, under-utilization of organizational systems set up, or circumvention of systems by personal networks and cliques

- Lack of organizational commitment and operational priority, starving knowledge transfer of money, time, management or IT support.

- Internal competition within organizations that discourages collaborative behavior and erodes the effectiveness of knowledge sharing activities

- Specific characteristics of the knowledge to be transferred can also affect the process. The degree of codifyability and teachability affects the ability of the organization to transfer capabilities within the organization but across distant geographic location.

- Organizational hierarchies also affect how people share knowledge both vertically and horizontally. Rigid hierarchical structures may prevent knowledge being shared up to hierarchy as suggestions or feedback, and also laterally, if it is assumed that all knowledge comes down the hierarchy from above. Moreover, structures that keep individuals in closed circles may experience a 'silo' effect that prevents knowledge from being shared with in groups in an organization

- Supervisor's influence over subordinates might also affect knowledge sharing. Subordinates often intentionally hoard their knowledge, anticipating that their

supervisors would not promote them if they demonstrate in public that they are more knowledgeable than their supervisors.

- Trying to use one method of knowledge sharing in different organizations can also be a problem. Whenever we need to transfer knowledge, the methods must always fit the culture with in that particular organization.

- Cultural impediments such as the belief that knowledge is power and not to be given away or the nature of cultures such as the bureaucratic, clan or entrepreneurial cultures which can deter knowledge sharing.

- The ICT trap, based on the assumption that IT positively supports and improves knowledge sharing, while discounting the important role played by personal interactions in the process.

2.5. Conditions Necessary for Effective Knowledge Sharing

To get an optimal result from knowledge sharing it is important to study and analyze the conditions, which can make sharing successful. Some of the conditions are;

- Creating a culture that values creativity, continuous improvement and the sharing of ideas. It is important for leaders to create an atmosphere in which members in an organization can feel safe to share their knowledge.

- Strong technology and improved work process.

- Love, care and trust are also identified as conditions for knowledge sharing. Specifically, the role of trust was seen as central. Without trust, regardless of

any formal knowledge sharing requirements in place, sharing is very difficult. Social interactions, which are related to trust, are also important elements of social capital that can facilitate knowledge transfer among different units in an organization. Through social interactions, organizational units gain more opportunities to share their resources or ideas and thus increase knowledge flows within the organization

- Inter unit competition is also identified as a favorable condition to facilitates knowledge sharing within an organization.

In addition to the above conditions rewarding transmitters, communicating clear overall goals, following up with detailed feedback, and setting a good example by sharing their own knowledge is important for knowledge sharing to be successful. Spending time together or regular meetings are also important and collaborative mechanisms with multiple interactions and feedback may also foster interaction

2.6. Types of Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing has been conceptualized as involving two distinct ways of transferring knowledge across organization subunits. The first is through direct contact between individuals, when one person advises another about how to complete a specific task (e.g., Cummings & Cross, 2003; Hansen, 1999; Reagans &McEvily, 2003; Tsai, 2001). The hallmark of such person-to-person sharing is that the handover of knowledge requires direct contact between the provider and receiver of the knowledge, in meetings, by phone, or via e-mail. Because it involves direct contact, such sharing allows for the transmission of tacit or non codified knowledge, which is

knowledge that has not been fully articulated in writing (Von Hippel, 1988). This type of knowledge sharing may be called personal advice usage.

The second way to obtain knowledge is from written documents that may be available in paper or in electronic format (e.g., Hansen & Haas, 2001; Werr&Stjernberg, 2003). Sharing via written documents is most appropriate for knowledge that can be readily codified (Winter, 1987). Because of the prevalence of electronic knowledge management systems in many companies, we focus on the sharing of electronic documents, which are created when employees record what they know in writing and upload those documents into databases that can then be accessed by other employees as needed. The hallmark of such document-to-people sharing is the separation between the provider and receiver: the receiver of the document does not have to contact or speak to the provider directly but can use the document as a stand-alone resource. This type of knowledge sharing may be labeled electronic document usage.

These two basic types of knowledge sharing are not mutually exclusive but may be undertaken simultaneously by individuals seeking to obtain knowledge from other parts of the organization. One type of sharing may also lead to another: someone accessing and reading an electronic document may decide to contact the author of that document, whereas someone obtaining personalized advice from a colleague may receive a tip about the existence of a useful electronic document. Nevertheless, personal advice and document usage represent two ways of obtaining knowledge, and it is useful to separate them conceptually and empirically because they are likely to involve different benefits and costs for task units.

a. *Process and content dimensions*

Understanding the potential value derived from using knowledge that is obtained from other parts of the organization involves both a process and a content dimension. First, process refer to the efforts involved in adapting knowledge obtained for a task (Huber, 1991). For electronic documents, this adaptation process involves evaluating and reworking the documents in order to incorporate the knowledge they contain into the task appropriately. For personal advice, the process of adaptation requires securing the efforts of people with useful expertise in explaining what they know and customizing that knowledge to the task. These activities involve process costs that may reduce the benefits of utilizing knowledge.

Second, to assess productivity benefits, the content of the knowledge obtained must be considered, where content refers to the quality of the knowledge accessed by the task unit (Kane, Argote, & Levine, 2005). Quality indicates the rigor, soundness, and insight of the knowledge conveyed by a document or person irrespective of the task at hand. The process and content dimensions of knowledge use are theoretically distinct because even when the quality of their content is high, the documents or advice obtained by the task unit may still require substantial adaptation to apply them appropriately to the task at hand. Thus, process and content dimensions may differentially affect the extent to which a task unit benefits from using knowledge from other parts of the organization.

b. *Methods*

The most popular method of knowledge sharing is related to communities of practice. Communities of practice can be seen as a vital ingredient in the acquisition and sharing of knowledge. Socialization, externalization, combination and internalization are also ways of creating as well as sharing knowledge. Specifically, socialization is the process of converting tacit knowledge through shared experience.

Lessons learned process is also cited as one way of sharing knowledge It involves sharing the lessons learned by employees when they are undertaking their tasks. But there is always a confusion of associating the term lessons learned, sometimes with mistakes and sometimes successful tasks. Related to this best practice replication process and meetings are also recognized as ways of sharing knowledge within an organization.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of the research deals with the main issues related to the research methods. The main parts discussed in this chapter are research design, data source and type, data collection instruments, sample and sampling method, validation of instruments, and data analysis and interpretation. In addition, to successfully meet the objectives of the research, descriptive and mixed qualitative research are used,

3.1. Research Design

The selection of a research design involves the consideration of assumptions to study the research, the nature of research, data collection methods, and Data Analysis methods.

This research paper will attempt to assess how knowledge management and knowledge sharing practices and challenges are looks like in the Ethiopian Management Institute. Therefore, it has employed both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. Specifically, the research used exploratory (emphasizes on discovery of ideas and insights) and descriptive techniques (concerned with determining the frequency with which an event occurs or relationship between variables).

3.2. Data Source and Type

The research used both primary and secondary sources. The primary source used is a survey. On the other hand data also collected from secondary sources like training program report, consultancy services report and other management development reports; institutional level reports, memos, recent books and official web sites.

To gather data on the perception, practices and challenges of knowledge sharing primary source gives the researchers tailored information and it is managed by a questionnaire and discussion form. The questionnaire will be distributed to management teams, consultants and other employees. The questionnaires distribute to management teams and employees will be similar questions and it is intended to validate the employees' opinions. In addition to this to triangulate information open questions are prepared to gather qualitative data and discussion forums will also organize.

The secondary data mentioned above is used to complement the primary data or used as a baseline and reference for the validity and reliability of the research. In general each source will be managed properly to fulfill the information needs of the researchers.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

Quantitative and qualitative data from primary sources will be collected from five main departments (management development department, human resource management department, procurement and property management department, budget and finance department and facility management department) of the Institute and its

individual members (management team, consultants and other employees). The development of the survey instrument, a questionnaire could be guided by the problem statements based on the literature review. The survey questionnaires will be designed in a way to assess the perception, understanding, practices as well as challenges of knowledge sharing at Ethiopian Management Institute (EMI). Discussion forum will also be arranged in order to get sufficient information about the study issues.

3.4. **Sample and Sampling Method**

The research entitled knowledge sharing will be conducted on the Ethiopian Management Institute, mainly focusing on five main departments and its individual members. Therefore, the focus of the study will be the management team, consultants and other permanent employees of the departments and those who are working on the management positions. The main reason why the researcher will select these departments for such a study is that most knowledge based jobs of the Institute are performed in these departments which the members are expected to share their job related and other knowledge with a view to enhance performances. There are a total of about 210 permanent non-management employees and 10 management members in Institute. Hence, the study will focus on 150 permanent employees and 5 management members which are working in the five selected departments. Therefore, the total sample size of the study will be 105 employees and 10 management team members.

In this research, the sampling method which the researcher will use stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The rationale for choosing random sampling

techniques in general is that it provides the better estimate of parameters in the studies in comparison to purposive sampling. And also the basis for specifically selecting stratified sampling technique is that, to divide the heterogeneous population in to a number of homogenous population. Thus, in order to take sample from different levels of hierarchy (Management Consultants and other Employees) in the organization will be used stratified sampling techniques in order to make the population homogeneous. These techniques will be chosen because it is used to assist in minimizing bias when dealing with the population. In addition purposive sampling will also be engaged in order to get information from selected management and employees.

There are many approaches to determining the sample size. However, for purpose of this research the researcher employed the published table (Glenn, 1992)

Sample Size for ±5% and ±10% Precision Levels where Confidence Level is 95% and p=0.5.

Size of Population	Sample Size (n) for Precision (e) of:	
	±5%	±10%
100	81	51
125	96	56
150	110	61
200	134	67
250	154	72
300	172	76
350	187	78
400	201	81
450	212	82

For the purpose of this study, based on the above mentioned sample size determination table for ± 5% precision levels where confidence level is 95% and

P=.05, the total population size of the five department is about 155 employees and management members. Thus, the sample size of the study could be 115.

3.5. Validation of Instruments

Before collecting the data, instruments will be pre-tested by researcher. The data collection instruments will be prepared by reviewing the relevant literatures and applied content validity principle. The instruments could be designed based on a five point likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and 3 for neutral. Here higher score reflect high level of satisfaction of respondents. On the other hand to collect qualitative information from leaders and employees regarding the perception and understanding of knowledge sharing at EMI open questions are used.

3.6. Data analysis Method

The questionnaires will contain both closed- and open-ended items. The closed-ended questions will be coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis, frequencies, description and cross tabulation is used in analyzing the results. The open-ended items on the survey asked participants to share comments and explanations in their own words. This resulted in a large amount of rich and descriptive information. Once the qualitative responses will clean up, the content of the responses will be analyzed and key themes will be drawn from across the responses. Much of the data will be collected from open ended questions is subject to content analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter will be concerned with data analysis and interpretation, and demographic characteristics of the respondents that were collected through questionnaires, interview and documents.

4. 1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The population of this study will comprise five main departments (management development department, human resource management department, procurement and property management department, budget and finance department and facility management department) of the Institute and its individual members (management team, consultants and other employees). The total population of the study will be 10 management members and about 150 permanent employees. The educational background of the population studies have from below 12 grades up to PhD (doctorate degree) in different professional areas. Sex and age group of the study population will be different.

4. 2 Presentation and Data Analysis

The raw data obtained from the respondents through the questionnaire paper will be organized by computer software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) that makes the computation precise, dependable and not time consuming. Based on the nature of the variables considered, a quantitative and qualitative data analysis method will be employed. The quantitative data gathered will be analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean value comparisons, and Kolmogrov-Smirnov Test, a non-parametric and distribution free test, which tries to determine if data sets differ significantly.

The important findings on the present practice of knowledge sharing at Ethiopian Management Institute (EMI) with respect to knowledge sharing concepts, techniques and mechanisms will be reviewed. The judgment of respondents on each question will vary due to the subjectivity perception of respondent's satisfaction rate on knowledge sharing practices. A particular response which is strongly disagreeing for one respondent may be

moderate, agree or strongly agree for another respondent. However, an effort will be made to acquire sufficient sample, conducting interviews, getting ideas from research papers and using internets to gain world experience, etc. to respond research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDING, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study will be conducted aiming at assessing the practices and challenges faced by Ethiopian Management Institute (EMI). To do so appropriate basic research questions and relevant objectives will be set. This chapter includes Summary of findings, Conclusions, and recommendations.

In the case of Ethiopian Management Institute, there is diverse perception and understanding on the benefits and methods of knowledge sharing among the employees and management team. Besides, managers and employees don't know the proper conditions for knowledge sharing, which results in weak knowledge sharing. There is also a gap in understanding the specific factors which affect the knowledge sharing in the institute and the suitable techniques to properly apply knowledge sharing. As a result there is no structured way of sharing knowledge.

5.1. Summary of Findings

Summary of major findings obtained from the data analysis and interpretation of current practices of the knowledge sharing and challenges will be indicated. Major identified gaps and its sources will also be indicated.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study the conclusion can be stated. Knowledge must be shared with in the organization in order for it to grow. It has been shown that the organization that shares knowledge among its management and staff grows stronger and becomes more competitive. Therefore, so as to share knowledge among the organization's member, there need to be well structured mechanisms and systems. And also all members of the organization must know the benefits of knowledge sharing well for the competitive advantage of their organization.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, suggestions will be provided. Major areas of recommendation will be:-

- Suggesting the methods and mechanisms of improving the perception of leaders and employees on the benefits of knowledge management and knowledge sharing.

- Propose appropriate mechanism and systems for knowledge sharing at the institute.

Time Table

The research will take 5 months (June to October) and it is divided on the following table.

Ser No	Activities	June				July				August				September				October			
		Weeks				weeks				weeks				weeks				weeks			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1	Introduction and Related Literature review writing	▓	▓	▓	▓																
2	Designing Research Methods and Data Collection					▓	▓	▓	▓	▓											
3	Analyzing and interpreting collected Data										▓	▓	▓	▓							
4	Preparation of Research Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations														▓	▓	▓				
5	Compilation of final research report																		▓	▓	
6	Submission of Research Report to IGNOU																				▓

Research Cost

The research will require about Birr 21,500.00. The details are described as follows:

S.N	Cost Item	Amount in Birr*	Remark
1.	Stationery	4,500.00	
2.	Transportation expense	11,000.00	
3	Printing, Coping and binding	3,500.00	
4	Other expenses	2,500.00	
	Total	**21,500**	

* One USD is almost equal to 22.05 Ethiopian Birr.

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