

# Handling Knowledge in Indian Information Technology (IT) Organizations

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**Abstract**— With the several changes happening every day in societies and in thoughts say knowledge challenges are increasing day by day which are to be faced by business as well as other organizations. To tackle these challenges many tactics are implemented and are in process to be further improve. Handling of these challenges requires system under which one can work and let adaptation to the changes can be done smoothly. Today majority of business organizations have knowledge management program in one or another form. Indian business organizations are also feeling need of new business paradigms. Knowledge management is a systematic process for creating, acquiring, synthesizing, learning, sharing and using knowledge and experience to achieve organizational goals. This paper “Handling Knowledge in Indian Information Technology (IT) Organizations” underscores Knowledge Management practices in business organizations at main cities in India. Papers site an overview over the techniques and also include future improvements that can be done to ameliorate efficiency of Knowledge Management System.

**Key Words:** Knowledge Management, Indian Information Technology (IT) Organizations, Improvements in techniques and efficiency, Knowledge Management Systems.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge, a noun with long history, an entity which is exponentially growing in its volume. From ancient period, in the world history collection and keeping knowledge is considered as work of great responsibility. In addition, the purpose of knowledge collection and management is not just to pass it to next generation but also to take decisions using previous experience. It is this aspect we look in this part. Knowledge in the workroom—the ability of staff and corporation to construe and take decision warily—has regularly been managed by every single employee of corporation. To excel in the field where they work survivals always try to manipulate the available knowledge in the best way. In enterprises to obtain most valuable assets, knowledge and other IC components are used by playing role as fundamental resource. For further research and improvements, the main objective is to identify the combined knowledge of the organizations’ and the actions taken to successfully implement Knowledge Management within the organization.

## II. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge management is that set of organizations that comprises of people, technology and process of that organization. To obtain a well analyzed result out of raw data available about organization it will require all three components to act in coordination. Hence to obtain knowledge as a product one requires to balance among three this management is known as Knowledge management.

### 2.1. Defining Knowledge

Following are the definitions of Knowledge Management given by the neoteric:

- “Simply the transfer of knowledge from one person to another, the result of which enables the recipient to benefit from the collected wisdom of the more experienced members of an organizations or groups.” [Robert Villegas]
- “KM involves the identification and analysis of available and required knowledge assets and

*processes...so as to fulfill organizational objectives.” [Dr. Karl-Erik Sveiby]*

- *“KM is a concept in which an enterprise gathers, organizes, shares and analyzes the knowledge of individuals and group across the organization in ways that directly affect performance1” [Robert S. Seiner]*

## **2.2. Knowledge Management**

The Two Major Types of Knowledge: Tacit and Explicit. The one which is difficult to articulate and difficult to put into words, text, or drawings is known as Tacit knowledge. On the other hand, Explicit knowledge represents content that has been captured in some tangible form aforementioned. In other words, Tacit knowledge resides in the head of knowers, while explicit knowledge is usually contained with tangible or concrete media. It is observed that more tacit knowledge is, the more valuable it tends to be since it's difficult to articulate a concept. Valuable tacit knowledge often results in some observable action when every individual understands and accordingly make use of knowledge. For simple interpretation one can say that explicit knowledge tends to represent the final end product whereas tacit knowledge is the know-how or all of the processes that were required in order to produce the final product.

## **2.3. Misconception in Knowledge Management**

Even though after so many researches and theories there are certain misconceptions are still attached with term Knowledge Management below are few instance of them:

- It is assumed that KM is the “management fad of the day.” As people, have combined KM into such areas as Total Quality Management, Total Quality Leadership, Business Process Reengineering, and other sweeping reforms.
- View towards Knowledge Management is still related with IT-focus by people. Surely technology is an integral part of developing KM a reality; However, culture, people, and process still play superior roles. If there is no interpersonal trust, respect, and recognition present in the organization's culture, then knowledge sharing will be hard to achieve even with the finest technologies at work.
- Organizations believes that they have it invest a large sum of capital and resources to turn Knowledge management into reality. But there are many things that could be accomplished in terms of creating a knowledge sharing culture in

the organization without much financial investment.

- A peculiar misconception is that knowledge management should be done almost in isolation, as a separate entity of sorts. This beats the purpose of knowledge management. As in the introduction author have mentioned that concept of knowledge management comprises of various other components in the organizations, so there is no point arises to isolate KM.

Once these misconceptions are overcome, KM will have a healthier life in the organization. Till then we will be sub-optimizing without using the full potential of knowledge management.

## **III. OUTLOOK OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN INDIAN BUSINESS ORGANIZATION**

### **3.1. Potential function of Knowledge Management in Indian Business Organization**

Decline in India and other Asian countries after year 1997 caused a downturn in turnover in mainstream of the companies, the major threat was the ability to decrease the time to market and develop a modest gain. During the subsequent five years, some other serious issues for organizations that were considered are cost decrease and better-quality production.

For implementing a Knowledge Management program, imagine knowledge management to lead them to innovative ways of doing business, elevated market shares and produce plentiful future prospects for business. This also leads to revenue development, cultivating competitive benefit and employee progress. The imminent benefits on long-term basis are in context of increasing “revenue progress”, “employee progress” and “product improvement”, these are very serious parameters while calculation of the accomplishment of a knowledge management implementation. On the other hand, short-term paybacks expected by respondents would be “dropping prices”, “cultivating marketing policies”, “expanding customer focus” and “enabling profit development”.

### **3.2. Current stats of Knowledge Management**

Total business organizations those had or were seeing a knowledge management policy in India is 75%, out of which 19% had not any program in place but were conscious about knowledge management and organization which did not have a knowledge management program as well as weren't conscious about knowledge management and its profit to business are 6% of the rest.

Status of Knowledge Management programs for organizations differ since every individual business organization implements Knowledge Management program at different extent. Nearly 12.5% organization had Knowledge Management as an integral part of their business process and the value of organization. 31.5 % organizations have integrated the knowledge management strategy with some technical or cultural issues. 37.5% organizations are utilizing knowledge management procedures to achieve known benefits and 50% organizations have initiated knowledge in a non-uniform manner with pilot approaches in place. 50% organizations have no knowledge management strategy in place for achieving overall organizational goals. However, the implementation falls short of a full Knowledge Management program.

To implement Knowledge Management strategy business organization divides its level. Mainly these levels are company level (50%), Departmental level (37.5%), Division level (12.5%). Among these departmental level is identified as most suitable.

### **3.3. Role of Technology in Knowledge Management**

One of the fundamental question in KM is about the role of technology in KM organizations. This issue involves, whether IT is evitable (McDermott and O'Dell, 2001; Hibbard and Carillo,1998) or inevitable component (Duffy, 2000; Lang, 2001) of KM? Does technology form a part, only a part of KM? Is IT a key component of KM and is it as important as people and process components? To answer these questions from various views we consider a portion of KM projects fail in spite 94 percent of companies considered KM to be strategically important for their business (Kleindl 2003). Some others report says the failure rate is as high as 70% (Rossett,2002). Since KM is simply about good sense and managerial basics so successful KM projects requires an appropriate balance of technology, process, people and content is needed and should also be supported by proper strategy and change program. There are many views on that researchers and practitioners have given about the role of technology in KM.

According to Davenport and Prusak (1998) technology is least important when compared to organizational and human issues. "Usually people begin a KM project by focusing on the technology needs, whether they want a database or a portal. But the key is people and process" (Kaplan, 2002). Knowledge cannot, by definition, be converted into an object and "given" from one person to another. Information technology, while critical for enabling the spread of information, cannot capture and store knowledge. Only people can do that (Senge et al., 1999). Reneker and Buntzen (2000) discuss that KM visualizes people as primary knowledge managers rather than conceptualizing KM as set of practices to enhance utilization of knowledge. While some others argue: Duffy (2000) consider IT as playing its role in managing, storing and accessing documents and databases, but for any KM project to be successful IT professionals should be well aware about the various knowledge management processes. IT when integrated with KM processes becomes a major player in companies for KM processes. Stankosky and Baldanza (2000) in their conceptual framework have clearly stated that technology is one of the pillars of KM along with other pillars of organization, leadership and learning.

Hence, technology's support is necessary for KM in an organization. And it should also be noted that sophisticated technology infrastructure adoption often leads to Knowledge project's failure. IT infrastructure includes Email, document management, data warehousing, workflow software, decision support system etc. IT is also an important facilitator for storing and sharing organizational knowledge. So, we can conclude from the above discussion that IT is an indispensable enabler of KM.

## **IV. SOME KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES AT IT ORGANISATIONS IN INDIA**

After discussing a lot of theory about knowledge management let us put some light on practically implementation in IT organizations located in main cities. For this there are two key issues for any knowledge management strategy:

- Management of explicit information and processes.
- Management of people and the environment in which they work so that tacit knowledge is exchanged more naturally and systematically.

#### 4.1 Reasons for Launching Knowledge Management Programme:

Organizations mostly in IT sectors consider reasons which are as follows:

- To gain competitive advantage in the market organizations like TCS, CMC, Data core India Pvt. Ltd. implement knowledge management Programme.
- To maintain healthy relationship with customer and to further Improve customer retention/satisfaction, almost every company in Indian It market is putting efforts.
- By launching such Programme, goal of IT-organization is to retain key talent/expertise by keeping everything in record/knowledge
- Knowledge based research helps organizations to develop new services. Organizations like Cognizant tech., Infosys tech., HCL tech. focuses on this reason.
- Using such extensive Programme organizations' overall image in the market improves to very extent. 25% organizations in Indian IT have seen improvement after implementing KM Programme.
- Since resources keep moving from one department to other or might switch the organization there are chance of losing key personnel to avoid such situation Knowledge Management Programme are rapidly implied in the organizations.

#### 4.2 Sources of Knowledge acquisition:

Internal communication system in IT industry is indeed plays a crucial role as it is primary source of gathering information. Organizations like Java Soft tech, Anshin Software, HCL Technologies, and InfoVision Software etc. maintain their own internal system called Intranet. It is a set if online discussion forum and KM Portal which is a central repository for content are good sources of organizing, storing, sharing, collecting and discussion for which are in practice. Below are few other sources mentioned for Knowledge acquisition which organizations use:

- Websites collects around 80% of information. These are important for the new employees or for new events occurred and are mostly used for updating or gaining knowledge.
- 55% of organizations in India refer to Journals or magazines as they are also good source of enrichment and perform same function as websites.
- 70% Organizations like R.S.Software arrange regular seminars from renowned personalities

and client's visits which include discussion about past background or the history of the company. These academic discussions help them a lot to get enlightened.

- Around 40% of organizations maintain a separate record about competitors. This helps them to analyze about feasibility and efficiency of particular strategy's implications.

#### 4.3 Managing Ideas or Innovations:

In India, 45% of total organizations practice innovation and consider it as most important constituent to triumph and rivalry in industry. The pioneers like skype, Google, Apple and Dell experimented novel strategies of doing business in India thus generate healthy amount of revenue. Indian organization like TCS, Infovision Software, Anshin Software, Infosys Tech also believe in innovation and keep investing adequate amount of money towards it.

Most of the IT organizations are turning towards Idea Management System (IMS) which is defined as a systematic, formal mechanism for soliciting, generating, developing, evaluating, selecting, implementing, spreading and learning from large numbers of ideas from anyone and everyone in the organization. Innovation phase has several stages which can be defined as Idea generation, Idea selection, Idea implementation, sustaining ideas, Idea diffusion. To manage Ideas almost all IT-organizations collect Ideas time to time and tend to implement them.

Previous system say, file system and the committee system are superseded by new IMS because of its advantages over them like an IMS is open to ideas from everyone in the organization, irrespective of their rank or division. Moreover, transparency and sharing of ideas becomes a force multiplier using this system.

Company like IBM which is committed to seeking, listening and acting on new ideas of employees have an online collaborative tool called "thinkplace" which provides an open collaborative forum for ideas generation and refinement. To foster employees and IT-professional towards contribution of new Ideas thinkplace organize competitions in different cities around the world.

## V. CONCLUSION

The IT-industry is very much resource -oriented and thus it's important to ensure that knowledge in the minds of resources is safeguarded. Knowledge in the

organization is divided such that 26 per cent is stored on paper and 20 per cent digitally, an astonishing 42 per cent is stored in employees' heads. Movement of resource either towards new role or switching the organization causes loss of learning and knowledge. Intellectual capital which is considered as major assets of IT organizations has problem, that is it has legs and walks home every day. At the same rate, experience walks out the door, inexperience walks in the door. Whether or not many IT organizations admit it, they face the challenge of sustaining the level of competence needed to win contracts and fulfill undertakings. Analysis of few reports show that HR departments are responsible for introducing KM in most of the sample organizations. Most of the organizations like TCS, Infosys, IBM, Oracle, and Satyam Computers have their learning centers or KM team which is responsible for strategizing to implementation. An CMM model which has been developed by Software Engineering Institute (SEI) helps organizations like Wipro, TCS, Siemens's Information Systems, SSI Darametics, Techspan, IBM global by providing lead by modelling their people processes. It provides what an organization must do to improve and mature its people practices and to get appropriate results through surveys and other assessment methods. Thus, knowledge management, if initiated and cultivated with all strategic intent and supported by the top decision makers is going to bring positive change in the organization-its people, process and practices.

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