Editorial

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The contents of this special issue of *IJITM* on knowledge sharing within knowledge intensive organisations are a response to a perceived need to re-evaluate both what is meant by knowledge sharing and what is meant by knowledge intensive organisations. The topic became the focus of much attention in the 1990s with authors such as Nonaka (1991, p.96) claiming that knowledge had become "... the one true source of lasting competitive advantage". Others followed, such as Alvesson (1993) who explored the concepts of knowledge-intensive work and knowledge-intensive firms and Blackler (1995) who examined the role of knowledge, knowledge workers and organisational competencies.

IT-based KM in particular appeared to offer the promise of ever increasing returns (Teece, 1998) from the creation of databases of expertise (Davenport et al., 1998) that would make the 'treasure house' of knowledge that existed inside organisations more

widely available (O'Dell and Grayson, 1998). Later, following the dot-com crash in 2000, the tide turned and the notion of knowledge sharing and knowledge management in general became the focus of much critical attention (Alvesson and Karreman, 2001; Wilson, 2002), particularly with regard to the role that information technology was able to play (McDermott, 1999; Walsham, 2001).

Notwithstanding this, few would deny that knowledge-intensive organisations continue to exist or that knowledge sharing takes place within them. Although a few of the early pioneers have been prompted to revisit their earlier work (Nonaka and von Krogh, 2009) there has not yet been a systematic attempt to reassess the issue of knowledge sharing in knowledge-intensive organisations. Those who write on the subject tend to divide the topic into generations (McElroy, 2002). While not following this course precisely, we have also divided the articles in this issue into different sections or areas of interest.

The first section consists of four articles that examine the phenomenon of knowledge sharing primarily at the individual level. These consider the effect of organisational rewards on individual knowledge sharing, the knowledge sharing process in higher education institutions, the knowledge sharing process in virtual teams and the role of knowledge brokers' in the process of knowledge transfer.

The next four articles examine the phenomenon of knowledge sharing primarily at the organisational level. These explore the process of organisational knowledge conversion, the role of inter-organisational groups in knowledge sharing, the evaluation of the maturity of an organisation's KM capacity using a community maturity model and the components of a firm's organisational KM capabilities.

The last two articles focus on what is sometimes referred to as 'next generation' KM (Smith and McKeen, 2007) – the world of social networks and Web 2.0. The first explores the tension between KM and what is termed enterprise 2.0 and the second proposes a framework for the evaluation of enterprise wikis.

The article by Xi Zhang and Doug Vogel explores the relationship between reward and knowledge sharing within organisations and provides significant evidence that organisational reward is an important factor affecting knowledge sharing. They develop a three-way interaction model adapted from social exchange theory and social loafing theory. Using cross-sectional data from more than ten different organisations, they test under which task conditions, and for which employees, the organisational reward system is effective. Their results indicate that knowledge sharing visibility is a moderator of interactive effects of organisational reward and employee's exchange ideology on an employee's knowledge sharing behaviour.

Nor Ashmiza Mahamed Ismail, Mark Xianzhong Xu, Michael Wood, and Christine Welch propose a framework for research knowledge sharing in higher education institutions. The study explores three aspects: why, what and when to share. The article starts with a review of the nature of knowledge, knowledge sharing in corporate sectors, and research knowledge sharing in higher education institutions. It adopts an interpretative approach with qualitative analysis, which has been employed to understand the knowledge sharing culture within a university. The results show that there are six core drivers, which positively induce researchers to engage in research knowledge sharing, and 11 factors that appear to weaken their tendency to share research knowledge. The authors indicate that the types of knowledge shared among researchers from all career phases are varied across the timeline of a research project. Finally, three types of researcher are identified, linked to the researchers' career phases.

Elly Philpott offers a research study on motivations, enablers and barriers to successful participation in EU FP7 projects. The article uses socio-technical theories, such as gratification theory, social exchange theory, bond theory and identity theory, to explain knowledge sharing in virtual teams and communities of practice and proposes that applicable theories are life cycle phase dependent. The case study highlight the role of technologies for knowledge sharing and incorporate individual user characteristics, expertise in tool use, and characteristics of the information systems success model and co-opetition theory to describe knowledge sharing phenomena.

According to Alexander Perrin, circulation of knowledge in organisations can be considered as a process of translation. Knowledge transfer thus involves modification of the knowledge during that process. The article analyses the role of knowledge brokers in the translation process. The author starts by looking at the different theoretical views on knowledge transfer in the organisational context. Then, the rhetorical approach of knowledge transfer through the image of 'translation' is introduced. According to a qualitative methodology, in a multinational company, the author addresses the importance of a neutral translator during knowledge transfer and knowledge codification.

Cécile Gardies and Jean-François Marcel offer a comprehensive study of knowledge conversion dynamics. They explore organisational knowledge conversion with a case study of trainee teachers in France. The article describes three dimensions to knowledge: the epistemological dimension concerning the nature of knowledge, the ontological dimension concerning the knower and the praxeological dimension relates to social action, interactions and practices. The article enriches Nonaka's spiral of knowledge with a third dimension, which makes a noteworthy contribution to the existing literature on the modelling of knowledge conversion in organisations.

Rosemary Van Der Meer, Luba Torlina, and Jamie Mustard focus on the increasing interest in the role of inter-organisational groups in sustainable development. They argue that these groups can span the boundaries between government and industry organisations and bring a local focus to the issues with their local knowledge and expertise. The article aims to improve the understanding of how knowledge is shared in such groups. Using interviews, observations and social network analysis in a case study of an Australian environmental group, the authors examine some of the issues that are raised when attempting to share knowledge in groups with members from different organisations that interact at multiple levels and span internal and external boundaries.

In their article, 'The development and application of a community maturity model' Imed Boughzala and Ikram Bououd propose a new community maturity model, developed in a series of focus group meetings with professional KM experts, that can be used to determine the maturity level of a community from a KM perspective. The model assesses members' participation and collaboration, and the KM capacity of a community. It has been piloted in a chief knowledge officers' professional association. The article contains a review of maturity models in general, and knowledge-oriented maturity models in particular, and reports on the development and application of the initial version of the model as well as the method used to apply it within the chief knowledge officers' professional association. It concludes by suggesting some possible avenues for future research concerning both the model and its application.

In their study of organisational knowledge management capability, Abdullah Kammani, Hema Date and Nisar Hundewale examine the phenomena of knowledge intensive firms and KM capabilities and ask what the components of a firm's KM

capability are, what characteristics these components might have and which components are the most important for an organisation's KM capability? Using a multiple case study methodology, the article explores the factors that influence the realisation of KM capabilities in a knowledge intensive firm. The study proposes a conceptual model for KM capabilities in knowledge intensive firms and offers some implications of the work for both academics and practitioners.

In 'KM versus enterprise 2.0: a framework to tame the clash' Elena Alberghini, Livio Cricelli and Michele Grimaldi argue that traditional approaches to knowledge management are characterised by a top down approach that is not suited to today's business environment. The article explores the background to the traditional approach to KM and contrasts this with what they describe as the enterprise 2.0 phenomenon that has emerged in response to a changed environment. They present a case study of Eni, an integrated energy company, and the framework they used to show some of the benefits that enterprise 2.0 and social technologies can bring when attempting to manage knowledge, focusing in particular on how to support current users' needs.

The article by Zeeshan Ahmed Bhatti, Serge Baile and Hina Mahboob Yasin looks at one of the most widely used of Web 2.0 tools, wiki technology, and examines how we can measure the success of its implementation. The article contains a comprehensive review of the application of wikis to corporate and enterprise-level applications and an evaluation of the success of enterprise wikis. It also proposes a detailed framework for studying enterprise wikis related to project management tasks using an extension of DeLone and McLean's model of information systems success. The framework is split into three levels: perceived wiki success, process, and perceived net benefits. The article concludes with some observations about how the framework could be used to measure the success of corporate wiki systems from an end-users perspective.

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