
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Tojo Thatchenkery is a Professor and Director of the Organisation Development and Knowledge Management program at the Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia, USA. He is also a Doctoral Faculty at Fielding Graduate University and a member of the NTL Institute of Applied Behaviour Science and the Taos Institute. Thatchenkery is the Author of several books and articles on organisational change and social constructionist thinking (<http://www.appreciativeintelligence.com>). He has consulted with many international organisations, including Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, American Red Cross, IBM, Alcatel-Lucent, General Mills, 3M, International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Tata Consulting Services (India).

Ajoy K. Dey is a Professor of Supply Chain and Operations Management at Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater NOIDA, India. He edits the South Asian Journal of Business & Management Cases - a Sage Publication. He is a member of many Editorial Advisory Boards and a Regular Reviewer of many leading *International Management Research Journals*. A University Rank holder, Dr Dey, possesses a blend of corporate, consultancy and academic experiences. Specific areas of interest for Dey are logistics and supply chain; engagement studies of students, patients and employees; project management and behaviour of millennial generation. Dey has conducted many training sessions, seminars and workshops in India and abroad. He has served as a Resource Person at many Faculty and Management Development workshops. He conducts courses of supply chain management, operations management, research methodology and decision modelling with spread sheet.

Organisations' big- and small-mammoth conglomerates to small businesses face a common problem: How to capture and share the tacit knowledge that not only keep vital operations running smoothly but may also be behind their competitive advantage? For a large multinational corporation operating in six continents and multiple time zones, the knowledge sharing challenge is critical. The vast conglomerate may have pockets of

excellence where one unit or location has a demonstrated history of solving problems quickly and efficiently. However, rest of the organisation does not know about these best practices. Or, even if they have come to identify them, the leadership is not clear about how to get buy-in from rest of the organisation. The classic resistance to change sets in. A location head may feel threatened that he has to adopt something from a lesser known unit. How can they be better than us? Or, imagine the case of a global consulting company bidding on a multimillion dollar contract with a state government in USA. The partner spearheading the proposal has just learned that their Australian counterpart had successfully won a similar contract from New Zealand government. For the U.S partner, the challenge is now clear: What can she learn quickly from the experience of her Australian counterpart that may have relevance to her current bid? Time is short and the task is complex. Is there a place in the knowledge management program of the company that she can look to learn more about how the Australians' did the bidding? To her surprise, she finds a "lessons learned" page and anxiously browse through them looking for nuggets of wisdom. However, she soon realises that most of them are principles and norms that she has already known about. What about the "real" knowledge or what social scientist Michael Polanyi called the "tacit" knowledge?

The issue is not different for a small business having a hard timekeeping employees in its payroll. By the time an employee gets trained and start performing well, he or she leaves for the competition. The resources spent on hiring and training the employee are wasted. Not only that the small business is not able to capture the tacit knowledge that the employee may have gained during 1 year of training. Had they captured it, the company could have transferred those to a new employee.

In the end, some of the knowledge management challenges become turf battles rooted in human psychology. No amount of advanced technology-based knowledge management architecture with elegant visual interface can change the fundamental human tendency to share or not to. As pointed out by Thatchenkery and Chaudhry (2007) and Thatchenkery (2005), one of the optimal ways to create a knowledge management program is first to create a knowledge sharing culture. To do that, leadership needs to focus on situations or specific incidents when key stakeholders are engaged in effective knowledge sharing as opposed to when they are not. By looking at the successes, one can create more of them. Analysing the failures in knowledge sharing may give us insights about root causes but not actionable steps to create a robust system. However, if we look at specific incidences of effective knowledge sharing, we may be able to identify the knowledge enablers (Thatchenkery, 2005) who are behind effective knowledge management practices and then find a way to build on them.

Many of the articles in this special issue titled *Transformative Approaches for Knowledge sharing* look at the complexities of knowledge management and organisational learning and strive to use the positive approaches when possible. In the first article of this special issue - *A Phoenix Rises from the Ashes: Creating and Destructing Value through Reflection*, Suvì von Becker, Eeva Aromaa, and Päivi Eriksson explore how reflection reinterprets the meaning of the value creation and destruction process. Using qualitative content analysis of transcripts of personal interviews, they were able to demonstrate the significant role that reflection plays in value creation and destruction and how it can create new understanding.

In the next paper - *Challenges in Academic Commercialization: A Case Study of the Scientists' Experiences* Finnish scholars Outi-Maaria Palo-oja, Marke Kivijärvi, and Eeva Aromaa share their learning from a 2-year commercialisation project. A Finnish

university and several life sciences companies and intermediary organisations worked earnestly to produce useful and actionable knowledge through collaborative research. Using narrative episodes as the data format, they studied how the actors attached versatile meanings to commercialisation. It was found that academics place more value for research and teaching instead of commercialisation and this mindset can come in the way of highlighting the business case of new product ideas. Academics must learn to communicate the pragmatic and commercial value of the new inventions if such collaborative efforts were to succeed in the future.

The next article - *Business Models for Research-based Spin-offs: The Strategic Entrepreneurship Perspective* and authored by Jukka Niskanen, Ville-Veikko Piispanen, and Tero Montonen builds on the same theme. This case study shows how a robust business model can be designed for a university-based start-up. Using qualitative content analysis of documents, interviews, and field diaries, this action research project found that there were many ways start-ups could benefit from complementary business models based on innovative ideas of strategic entrepreneurship.

The next paper by Kristine Brands and Debora Elam - *Identifying Teaching Best Practices for Accounting Courses Using Appreciative Inquiry*, shares the learning that came out of merging two accounting programs in a university in USA. Building on their previous research that examined quality enablers for online accounting programs, this study focused on identifying teaching best practices for accounting courses for the university. The research model used for this project was based on Thatchenkery's (2005) appreciative sharing of knowledge (ASK) model because it encourages knowledge sharing to build on the positive experiences of the organisation. This study was conducted using a virtual approach instead of the traditional face-face meetings used by Thatchenkery's ASK model (2005). Based on the findings of the study, a best practices framework for teaching accounting courses was started for the university.

Marcia Docherty's paper - *Action Research: A Process for Developing Professional Capacity within a Community of Practice*, as the name suggests, it illustrates how action research helped challenge an entrenched training practice within the medical ultrasound community of practice. The action research process also resulted in an unintentional shift in the professional identities of two co-researchers, thereby demonstrating the existential process inherent in it. Docherty also points out that action research can increase organisational capacity through the development of individual professional identity.

In *Teaching and Learning Business Ethics in a Multicultural Group*, Raminta Pučėtaitė, Anna-Maija Lämsä, Johanna Kujala, Anna Heikkinen, Elina Riivari, and Raimonda Agnė Medeišienė suggest a mixed learning approach for teaching business ethics in a multicultural group. Using students' feedback, they analysed the effects of the mixed learning approach on students' learning experiences. The article adds new knowledge to the emerging literature on business ethics teaching in higher education by presenting an approach that allows teachers and students to join in constructive knowledge creation in a multicultural group. In doing so, the article increases our knowledge and understanding of the effectiveness of business ethics teaching and learning, while fostering the role of diversity in business management.

In *Mapping Public Procurement Practices in India*, authors Saroj Koul, Uma Kumar, Vinod Kumar, and Rakesh Verma explore the challenges involved in this complex process public procurement expenditure, which is between 20 and 30% of GDP. Thanks to the introduction of Public Procurement Bill in the Parliament of India in 2012, the topic assumed great significance and visibility. This paper not only explores the prevalent

public procurement activity in India but also identifies and maps benchmarking practices with regard to recent international studies available including those conducted by World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. In a related paper, *Knowledge Management Process at BHEL: A Case Study* Geeta Rana and Alok Goel critique the knowledge management (KM) practices prevalent in India's behemoth Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL). Using a KM performance scorecard (e-map scorecard), they examined the in-house knowledge sharing processes and the extent to which information and technology was used to facilitate the exchange of knowledge. They found that linking KM practices with organisational goals increased the likelihood of the achievement of those goals.

In *Managing the Transfer of Aerospace Knowledge*, Ronald Newton shows that knowledge gained from technical experience in the aerospace engineering can enhance aerospace industry in general. Managing the transfer of this tacit knowledge, often intrinsic to senior members of the organisation, is a key component. Using a qualitative methodology that involved eight aerospace companies and structured questions that were posed to 20 aerospace engineers with 10 or more years of experience in the aerospace industry, the study generated proven best practices by experienced engineers. His analysis revealed that knowledge transfer has a significant level of importance to the aerospace industry.

Milly Mocodean and Rita McNeil's paper - *Organizational Metacognition: Creating a Culture of Intentioned Learning*, proposes an emerging framework based on the ATLAS Learning Strategy Spectrum that can be applied throughout an organisation to achieve specific workplace learning objectives at optimum performance, productivity, and engagement levels. The ATLAS 4-step workplace learning strategy framework can be used to guide organisational leaders and trainers through a culture-creating process designed to explore, identify, and leverage individual and organisational metacognitive processes.

In *Managing Key Polarities in a Post-Crisis Organizational Learning Initiative*, Chetan Borkhetaria explores how the design and implementation of a management development program addressed tensions arising from common challenges faced by MNCs after the global financial crisis. Supporting growth with lean resources and balancing global consistency with local relevance were the key challenges. The author reframed these tensions as polarities to be managed instead of problems to be solved. Three factors have been identified in the effective management of these polarities including the design team's culture, the program's design, and the implementation strategy. Several recommendations are offered for designers of such organisational learning initiatives to consider when faced with similar tensions.

In the last paper in this special issue, the *Art of Learning for Knowledge Sharing: A Case Study of Parisar Asha*, authors Jaya Gupta and Pooja Misra correctly emphasise that the formative mind of a child will flourish when opportunities of experimentation exist. They share the learning from Parisar Asha, a nonprofit organisation in India that tries to help the young minds out of rote learning and encourage creative thinking.

We hope that the papers in this special issue have shed new insights for creating efficient and pragmatic approaches for knowledge management. We thank Editor-in-Chief Professor Mohammed Dorgham for giving us this opportunity to guest edit the special issue. We also appreciate the timely assistance of the editorial staff of Inderscience throughout the review and production process.

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