

**The Challenges of Knowledge Sharing in Intercultural
Organizations' with specific to Multinational Companies
in India.**



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Organizations' with specific to Multinational Companies
in India.**

**Postgraduate Master's degree
Dissertation**

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Declaration

I DESINA POOJITA, declare that this research report is my own, unaided work, except as indicated in the acknowledgments, the text and the references.

It is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at Dublin Business School, Dublin.

It has not been submitted before, in whole, or in part for any degree or examination at any other institution.

DESINA POOJITA

Signature:

Date: 16.08.2013

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Abbreviations:

KM – Knowledge Management

KS – Knowledge Sharing

KMS – Knowledge Management System

MNC – Multi National Company.

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Abstract

In the prevailing ever-changing business environment, knowledge has become the single certain source for sustainable competitive advantage. It is generally agreed upon that knowledge sharing is a crucial process within the organizational settings, whether these are project teams, formal work groups or communities of practice. Many practitioners and academics assume that since knowledge sharing is crucial for achieving the collective outcome, people will share knowledge as part of their work requirements. However, many companies and institutions have experienced that knowledge sharing does not always happen in practice, regardless whether a person-to-person or a person-to-document strategy is followed. This study investigated possible causes of resistance or support by knowledge workers to the sharing of knowledge within a diverse organization. Research draws from positivist perspective and adopts a method of quantitative study. Data was collected through survey and document analysis. The data were deductively analyzed and the findings are presented and discussed using references to the literature that informed the study. Leaders of businesses can use the findings of this study to develop new processes and procedures for overcoming resistance to knowledge sharing, which might translate to increased productivity and competitive advantage.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the chapter

This chapter of the dissertation focuses on providing information regarding the problem under investigation. The chapter begins by providing a brief background of the challenges pertaining to knowledge sharing that employees face in organizations that bring together a mix of different cultural backgrounds. The problem statement has been defined and will be solved during the course of this research for the thesis. This chapter also highlights the research purpose for which the dissertation has been undertaken as well as the research aims and objectives that explain the rationale behind conducting this study. Moreover, this chapter presents the scope and significance of the study. The research questions are also identified, and forms a crucial part of the entire dissertation due to the fact that it forms the basis for the questionnaire and the research objectives.

1.2 Area of Research and Research Background

In the 21st Century business environment, there is a widespread recognition that organizational knowledge can be a main source of developing sustainable competitive advantage (Chong, Chong & Gan, 2011, Keller and Kastrup, 2009). Knowledge management is now believed to be one of the most significant parts of any organization which complements the business activities. As the economies around the globe are now becoming more knowledge based, knowledge has now transformed into one of the asset through which an organization can achieve competitive edge. (ennet ennet

According to Jennex (2006), many organizations have benefitted in terms of large savings from the adoption of knowledge management (KM) techniques. Over the years, organizations have felt that the process of organizational learning can be enhanced and improved through effective knowledge capturing, creation and sharing. Improved organizational learning

ultimately leads to increased organizational performance and provides more opportunities for gaining competitive advantage. An organization's competitive advantage is influenced by its ability to learn faster and adapt faster than its competitors. Only when an organization is equipped with appropriate knowledge, it is able to identify new business opportunities and threats in the business environment. The learning process of an organization therefore depends on its ability to gather and utilize knowledge and behavior which enhances the learning of employees and lead to better performance of organization in the future. Knowledge is the most costly resource and provides the highest returns, and its strategic management leads to sustainable competitive advantage.

An important aspect of knowledge management which has gained momentum in the last few years is knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing is essential for the functioning of any kind of firm. It tends to influence the interaction between an organization and the stakeholders or the network actors, thereby affecting the outcomes that a business is able to achieve. If a business is unable to share knowledge, it becomes difficult for it to efficiently utilize the specialized resources and abilities of employees as well as co-produce the new knowledge. According to several researchers such as Holden& and Glisby (2010) knowledge sharing is a significant factor in determining the relative competitiveness of the organization. In order to understand the concept of knowledge sharing, it is necessary to understand the concept of knowledge first.

Knowledge is "what people understand about things ideas, concepts, theories, procedures, practices and the way things are done" (Armstrong 9 . Knowledge is defined as the skills, facts and understanding that an individual gain through experience or learning, which improves an individual's ability of analyzing evaluating and taking decisions (Szulanski & Jensen, 2006). Knowledge can also be categorized as explicit and tacit knowledge.

Information is considered to be explicit when it can be shared between organizational actors. It can be expressed in formal systematic language and can be shared in several forms like manuals, scientific formulae, etc. On the other hand, tacit knowledge combines information with experience and skills of people. It is personal, difficult to retrieve and share as it normally resides only in the mind of individuals (Nonaka, 2007).

Knowledge sharing is not only about sharing codified information, but also includes sharing of experiences, images, beliefs and contextualized practices. Inter-organizational research has indicated that it is essential for the mutual knowledge creation between the network actors. It is only because of knowledge sharing that organizations can maintain jointly held knowledge base which facilitates mutual understanding among employees across the organization. The jointly held base of knowledge is considered critical for the mutual trust between various actors of the organization.

Previously, organizations were dependent on the assets such as capital, land and other physical resources for success. However in the modern business environment, trend has changed and organizations include knowledge as one of the resources which if managed properly can lead to sustainable advantage. According to Wang and Noe (2010) family business owners believed in transferring their commercial wisdom to their children, craftsmen taught skills to their apprentices and workers expanded their knowledge by exchanging ideas about the job. In the contemporary world, knowledge sharing is related to employee's contribution to knowledge application and innovation which ultimately lead to the competitive advantage. There are several advantages of knowledge sharing such as it leads to reduced production costs, completion of new projects in a shorter time period, improved team performance, higher innovation and higher performance in terms of improved sales, growth and revenue.

The tendency of organizations to become globalized in the 21st century had been quite irresistible. Multinational organizations operating across various countries have to customize their products according to the needs of each country, and knowledge management plays a large role in this task. Multinational companies are considered to be an important playground for cross border learning and knowledge transfer. These companies play a significant role in sharing knowledge as acquisitions and mergers provide an opportunity for parent and subsidiary companies to expand and renew their knowledge base. Multinational companies play a significant role in knowledge creation and diffusion. Multinational corporations operating in different economies find that they can achieve competitive advantage by exploiting locally created knowledge worldwide and by sharing this knowledge across intra-organizational boundaries (Schlegelmilch & Chini, 2003). However, although research on MNCs acknowledge the importance and benefits of knowledge sharing surprisingly few researchers have focused on the determinant factors for knowledge sharing with explicit attention paid to MNC

Over a period of some years, the multinational organizations are no longer viewed as unitary organizations, but in fact these organizations are considered as differentiated inter-organizational networks. Scholars view MNC's as globally distributed system of differentiated, somewhat integrated units, the competitiveness of which is influenced by sharing of resources. This emerged from the currently accepted explanation of why MNC's exist and is anchored in the traditional resource based perspective of the firm. Multinational corporations exist because they facilitate knowledge transfer and sharing of resources between units through an efficient internal channel.

In order to maintain an organizations knowledge base, the functional units of multinational organization have to share knowledge across the organization. These organizational entities must be able to share knowledge within organizational networks which are characterized by

separation and distance in terms of time, culture, space as well as language. With the advancement in technology, the distance between economies have been reduced and some of the inherent challenges arising due to communication and coordination costs have even been eliminated, some scholars have declared the “death of distance” while some others have still been persistent about distance still existing in internal business arena (Nachum and Zaheer, 2005).

Knowledge sharing in any organizations is affected by a number of factors such as culture, trust, motivation etc. Knowledge sharing is considered to be of significant importance for organizations, but it will be difficult to attain if there is a lack of knowledge sharing culture, motivation and trust. Organizational culture related to the communication and corporate languages are significant factors that can determine the knowledge sharing within an organization. Organizations in today’s world need a sound technological infrastructure to share knowledge. In Multinational Corporation, all these factors communication technologies, culture are very complex which hinders the other process of information sharing as well. As the relationship between subsidiary companies and the parent companies tend to be a dynamic one, the process sharing and development of information becomes much more important in these cross cultural settings. International co-operative units tend to encounter opportunities such knowledge transfer while at the same time challenges such as cultural barriers exist. Therefore, it is imperative to view the relationship between knowledge sharing process, organizational culture and the national culture as well.

1.3 Problem Statement

A problem statement is defined as a clear and concise description of the issues or problems that need to be solved. Writing the problem statement is an important and challenging step since the entire dissertation revolves around it. The problem statement of this dissertation is:

“The Challenges of Knowledge Sharing in Intercultural Organizations with specific to Multinational Companies”. This particular dissertation is focused on the case of India. It will evaluate the main problems and the issues that employees working in multinational corporations in India face when it comes to sharing knowledge and disseminating information.

1.4 Scope of the study

This dissertation is pertinent to the broader field of management. More specifically, this dissertation caters to the topic of knowledge sharing and is pertinent to the narrow field of organizational behavior. This dissertation deals with the challenges that employees working in intercultural organizations face with regard to sharing of knowledge and analyses the impact that various elements of the organization have in restricting or promoting knowledge sharing. In particular, this dissertation deals with the multinational corporations in India. The focus is to enhance the level of knowledge sharing practices in the multinational corporations situated in India and thus, to improve employee satisfaction and motivation. It covers the impact that is restricting sharing of knowledge in an organization not only creates differences and reduces employee morale, but it may also result in poor productivity and efficiency. Thus, it aims to improve the amount of knowledge that is shared with the employees belonging to different cultural backgrounds and improve organizational performance along with improving employee morale. Thus, it highlights how employee morale and satisfaction may improve as a result of increased sharing of knowledge in intercultural organizations.

1.5 Purpose of the study

Research purpose focuses on examining and analyzing the reasons due to which the dissertation is being undertaken. Establishing a clear research purpose forms a crucial step in the entire research process for the research purpose sets the stage for the dissertation and

enables the researcher to familiarize himself with the area of research as well as its philosophy. The main purpose of this particular dissertation is to develop an in depth and a comprehensive understanding of the issues and challenges pertaining to knowledge sharing that are faced by the employees that work in an intercultural setting. The main purpose would be to understand how the corporate culture and structure of the organization impacts the notion of knowledge sharing among employees that belong to different cultural backgrounds. The focus will be on India since India depicts a mix of different ethnic backgrounds and cultures. As such multinational corporations will be the prime focus since they bring together people from different countries, speaking different languages and practicing different religion.

This dissertation also aims to contribute to the literature already available on the organizational behavior topic of knowledge sharing and to what extent the multinational corporations in India practice knowledge sharing with other employees. Moreover, this paper will also highlight whether the cultural differences among employees working in an organization act as a barrier to the sharing of knowledge, as well as the role that the managers and leaders play in promoting knowledge sharing. Lastly, it will also discuss the measures that can prove effective for knowledge sharing in the organization.

1.6 Research Questions and Hypothesis

Research questions form a crucial part of the dissertation and help direct and guide the research purpose, aims as well as research objectives. In addition to this, research questions also direct and influence the findings of the dissertation as well as the conclusions that are drawn. The research questions for this particular research study include:

1. Do multinational corporations in India follow practices of knowledge sharing?

2. How does cultural difference among employees in an organization affect knowledge sharing?
3. What are the challenges that the employee face towards an effective knowledge sharing process in a cross-cultural organization?
4. What are the main cultural barriers in knowledge sharing?
5. Does the organizational structure affect knowledge sharing in multinational corporations?
6. Does organizational culture affect knowledge sharing in multinational corporations?
7. How can knowledge sharing in multinational corporations in India be improved?

Hypothesis: To address the research question following hypotheses for research findings are stated:

H1: Organizational culture is positively related to Knowledge sharing

H2: Shared vision positively affects the cross-cultural knowledge sharing.

H3: Flexible organizational structures positively affect knowledge sharing across teams.

H4: The level of knowledge sharing across teams is positively affected if there is enough time available for knowledge-related activities.

H0: Organizational Culture does not affect the knowledge sharing.

1.7 The research aims and objectives

Kothari (2009) claims that the main aim of any research should be to increase the familiarity of the researcher with the topic under study, as well as to explain the various characteristics of the concept discussed. In addition to this, the objectives of research in a study determine the source as well as the sort of information that will be used to gather

data for conducting the research. The main aims and objectives of this particular dissertation include:

- To identify the impact that organizational culture has on knowledge sharing
- To identify the impact that organizational structures have on knowledge sharing in multinational corporations
- To find out how knowledge sharing is perceived in intercultural organizations
- To understand the extent to which multinational organizations in India follow knowledge sharing practices
- To identify the challenges of knowledge sharing faced by the employees working in multinational corporations operating in India
- To analyze the role of leadership in enabling cross cultural knowledge sharing

1.8 Significance of the study

The significance of the study illustrates how the study will make important contributions to the literature that is already available as well as how the study can be used in the future. This particular dissertation highlights the major issue of knowledge sharing that is faced by employees working in intercultural organizations, such as the multinational corporations. This study will also make a positive contribution to the literature that is already available on the concept of knowledge sharing as well as provide valuable information to all the organizations that employ people belonging to various cultural backgrounds. In addition to this, since this dissertation focuses on the case of multinational corporations in India, this study will be of particular significance to the senior managers of all the multinational corporations in India and will enable them to identify the issues and challenges that employees face when it comes to sharing knowledge as well as make knowledge sharing more common in the organization.

1.9 Conclusion

This first chapter introduces readers to the title or problem statement of the dissertation. It identifies the scope and relevance of the problem and provides a brief background and the field of research. In addition to this, this chapter also highlights the research questions that form the focal point in any dissertation, and provide guidance for the methodology of the dissertation as well. Moreover, this chapter also throws light on the purpose of the research as well as the aims and objectives of the research that are the main reason for undertaking this research and have to be achieved during the course of the dissertation. The main objective is to identify the central issues and challenges that employees working in intercultural organizations face with regard to the notion of knowledge sharing. The scope and significance have also been presented in this chapter, and explain how the dissertation can be of particular importance, not just for the researcher but also for others who are not involved in the research process. Thus, it can be said that the introduction chapter acts as a skeletal structure on which the whole dissertation is based.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 KNOWLEDGE

“Knowledge” has been all the rage for over a decade in a very range of fields of management studies (Grandori and Kogut ; Eisenhardt and Santos 3 . There’s no agreement in the literature on what knowledge is, and the way it ought to be defined (Singh, Dilnutt, & Lakomski, 2008). Some researchers distinguish between knowledge and information (Nonaka, 1994) whereas others most frequently contemplate the term knowledge and information to be interchangeable (Wang & Noe, 2010). Alavi & Leidner (2001) posit that information is regenerated to knowledge once it’s processed within the mind of people and knowledge becomes information once it is articulated and presented within the variety of text, graphics, words, or alternative symbolic forms. We adapt this perspective by considering knowledge as information processed by individuals including expertise, facts and ideas relevant for individual, team, and organizational performance (Bartol & Srivastava, 2002). Some authors (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Earl, 2001) use the terms information and knowledge interchangeably, since they argue for little practicality in making a distinction. Knowledge involves all the experiences, intuition, values and even conviction that people possess (Lin, 2007). According to Little and Ray (2005) knowledge is not just limited to what we know, but also includes our values, perceptions and instincts. Knowledge is defined in a variety of ways. According to Santoro, Borges and Rezende (2006) one of the most common ways of defining knowledge involve dividing knowledge into two parts and then providing separate definitions of the two parts, explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. Despite the fact that both tacit and explicit knowledge provides different types of knowledge that exist, both the forms of knowledge are believed to be complementary in the sense that both are equal in importance. For instance, it is impossible for anyone to learn the art of writing unless and until the necessary skills of verbal language have been acquired. Thus, it can be said that

explicit knowledge has little value without the use of tacit knowledge. Knowledge is primarily formed when explicit knowledge interacts with the tacit knowledge (Little and Ray, 2005).

2.1.1 Tacit Knowledge

According to Villalba (2006), tacit knowledge can be defined by the fact that people possess more knowledge than they realize they do. Tacit knowledge is the knowledge that is embedded in a person's actions values ideas, emotions as well as his procedures, and exists only in the human mind or the human body (Sanchez, 2005). It has also been claimed by a variety of theorists and researchers that this type of knowledge is extremely difficult to teach or communicate to others. Thus, it is common practice to teach tacit knowledge through the concept of "learning by doing" with experimenting and training necessary in order to gain the relevant experience (Little and Ray, 2005). According to Little and Ray (2005) tacit knowledge can also be understood by considering it as the unconscious trial and error procedure. In this manner, individuals usually feel their way to success, and continue to enhance their success, without having specific knowledge of how to do it.

2.1.2 Explicit Knowledge

Unlike tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge involves that knowledge that can be easily codified or converted into a verbal or written form that is easily understood by all. Commonly, explicit knowledge includes such elements as manuals and formulas, and books that can be easily shared among individuals (Little and Ray, 2005). Despite the ease of understanding and sharing explicit knowledge, the main problem with explicit knowledge is that explicit knowledge, when stored, presents only minimal information compared to the amount of information that is needed for its correct usage. The information that is saved in the form of data is meaningless in itself and usually, out of context. For better understanding

of the data, it is of utmost importance that substantial information about the context of the data is available. This issue can be resolved in a number of ways. Firstly, saving explicit knowledge about the data context in the same medium as the data can provide substantial information to better understand the data. Moreover, Pathak, Mane and Srivastava (2006) provides that the problem can also be solved by communicating the information where the corporate culture of the organization provides substantial information about the data context, enabling better understanding of the data.

Typically, knowledge is obtained through experience, training as well as studies or academics. As soon as knowledge, be it written or verbal knowledge is articulated, it is transformed or converted into information within the context of a concept. Data can only be created in the case that a person has sufficient knowledge as well as accurate information. Sanchez (2005) claims that if knowledge possessed by one person is to be correctly interpreted by others, then all of them need to have a similar perspective, and a similar way to look at things in order to understand the knowledge clearly. Also, one of the basic requirements for knowledge to be easily shared among different people is that there should be trust among the people. Whether the trust is obtained through handing responsibilities of various areas, or through the formation of a team without status boundaries, trust is a necessary element for sharing and interpreting knowledge. Thus, it be said that the organization and work culture plays a major role in enabling knowledge to be shared in an organization.

Despite the fact that knowledge was previously considered absolute, constant and static, Little and Ray (2005) provide that this view of knowledge is untrue and outdated. However, theorists such as Villalba (2006) have a modern perspective of knowledge, where the context of knowledge in which the knowledge is created plays a crucial role.

2.2 STRATEGIES OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

According to Storey (2010), strategies of knowledge management help establish the objective as well as the mission of organizations and allow them to determine how to implement and achieve the established goals. Knowledge management strategies are of two types, codification and personalization. While the codification strategy of knowledge management focuses on the use of computers and other devices, the personalization strategy has its focus on the use of personnel and human resource. This notion is also supported by Bordia, Irmer and Abusah (2006) who claims that organizations can conveniently manage their knowledge through codification and personalization due to the fact that both these strategies have a profound effect and influence on the organizational infrastructure. However, despite the fact that both these knowledge management strategies have an impact on the way organizations carries out their routine activities, these strategies offer little guidance and support in measuring the results obtained through their application (Storey, 2010).

Lichtenstein and Hunter (2006) provide that it is important and beneficial for the organizations to use both the knowledge management strategies, despite the fact that focusing on one particular strategy is often recommended. In fact, it is often preferred to use both the strategies in the proportion of 80:20 in order to manage knowledge more efficiently and appropriately. By using knowledge management strategies in this manner, organizations are able to manage knowledge of different areas. In addition, different knowledge management strategies suit different kinds of organizations, experiencing dissimilar stages of maturity. All of the strategies of knowledge management directly impact the goods and services that are offered to the customers, and often becomes the source of competitive advantage for the firms that opt for knowledge management strategies (Storey, 2010).

2.2.1 Codifying

Codifying is a knowledge management strategy that attempts to convert tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. Storey (2010) provides that codifying mainly focuses on the use of computers and other such techniques, believing in the idea that the information should be made accessible and available for everyone in the organization. The main idea is that tacit or implicit knowledge has already been codified as well as stored in a database, bound by a relevant pattern in order for everyone in the organization to access the data, understand it and make use of it. Codifying the data is similar to formalizing the data due to the fact that this process is normally carried out in bureaucratic and older organizations, where standardized approaches and practices can be easily implemented (Villalba, 2006).

Storey (2010) claims that codifying takes its roots from the concept of reuse, where the employees are able to reuse the knowledge voluntarily or less voluntarily. If the process of codification is carried out correctly, the organization may be able to develop a lever, through the use and the redefinition of the code that has already been made, and to produce more efficient solutions. In fact, codifying of knowledge also enables the organization to enhance its competitive advantage by having knowledge embedded in the services it offers (Storey, 2010).

2.2.2 Personalization

Another important knowledge management strategy focuses on personalization, which takes place through the direct interaction of different people (Storey, 2010). As the name suggests, personalization involves such knowledge that is possessed by a particular person, and then dissemination of the knowledge of the owner to the other person through a direct interaction between the two concerned people. Personalization is usually approached when the organization passes on the tacit knowledge. One major drawback of this particular strategy of

knowledge management lies in the fact that due to the fact that the knowledge that is being transferred and shared is bound and restricted to one particular person, it is not possible to ensure the quality of the knowledge, neither is it possible to judge the knowledge objectively (Storey, 2010).

The personalization strategy is not only commonly used in consulting firms, but innovative organizations, with customized delivery systems also make common use of this particular knowledge management strategy. In addition, this strategy is also associated with the socialization process of knowledge conversion, and is greatly dependant on the particular situations and the people who possess and obtain the knowledge. Lin (2007) provides that observations and imitation are the most frequently used methods of knowledge sharing. An organization that aims to use personalization as a strategy to manage and share knowledge needs to recruit, select and develop personnel that possess high qualifications. According to Islam, Ahmad and Mahtab (2010) this particular strategy of knowledge management is gradually decreasing the importance and role of leaders due to the fact that it relies on the independence of the personnel.

2.3 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND SHARING

Knowledge is commonly construed as a set of abilities and competence that improve the opportunities of growth, success and survival (Ahmad and Daghfous, 2010). Owen-Smith and Powell, (2004) believe that knowledge is such a resource that enables a firm to gain a sustainable competitive advantage, whereas other theorists claim that knowledge enables an organization to achieve various specialized competencies.

According to Al-Alawi, Al-Marzooqi and Mohammed (2007) being able to differentiate between the two types of knowledge; tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge are important due to the fact that it greatly addresses the applicability as well as the transferability of

knowledge. Tacit knowledge is crucial for most of the organizations due to the fact that it forms an important source of competitive advantage for the firm, which the competitors find hard to copy or imitate. On the other hand, the embed of context, as well as the ambiguity of tacit knowledge not only makes it difficult to communicate clearly to others, but also decreases its transferability (Jong and Hartog, 2007).

Knowledge sharing is one of the KM processes which include: knowledge creation, Knowledge acquisition, knowledge codification, knowledge sharing and knowledge application (Liebowitz & Megbolugbe, 2003). Knowledge sharing refers to the provision of task information and know-how to help others and to collaborate with others to develop new ideas, solve problems, or implement policies and procedures (Cummings, 2004; Pulakos, Dorsey, & Borman, 2003). Knowledge transfer is seen as a process whereby an organization reproduces and maintains an intricate, tacit set of schedules in new settings (Wong, 2005). Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland (2004) claims that the result of knowledge transfer indicates that the transfer of knowledge leads to obtain and accumulate new knowledge. A number of researchers also focus on the extent to which knowledge has been internalized as well as institutionalized within the knowledge receiver (Ling, Sandhu and Jain, 2009). Moreover, intra-organizational transfer of knowledge is seen as the movement or transfer of knowledge within the organization, indicating the amount of information and the know-how that is transmitted among the various units within the organization. On the other hand, inter-organizational transfer of knowledge encompasses a learning process, where the transfer of knowledge is viewed in the context of joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions and as well as the organizations relationships with its suppliers, customers and other external stakeholders. Inter-organizational knowledge transfer focuses on many elements that affect the acquisition and gaining of knowledge from external sources and partners (Al-Alawi, Al-Marzooqi and Mohammed, 2007)

According to Kerr and Clegg (2007) knowledge transfer is defined as dyadic exchange and transmission of the knowledge of an organization between the source of the knowledge and the recipient of knowledge. In the case of subsidiaries, an outward transfer of knowledge implies the transfer of knowledge from the subsidiary to the other corporate units as well as the headquarters of the firm, while the term inward transfer of knowledge implies the knowledge transfer towards the subsidiaries from the external as well as internet networks of the organization. Riege (2005) provides that knowledge transfer is effective and successful when the receiver of the knowledge has integrated and amalgamated the knowledge into the context of the unit and has used it. Lin (2007) argues that the effectiveness of knowledge transfer depends on the perceived benefit as well as the extent to which the organization is satisfied with the concept of knowledge management.

Ahmad and Daghfous (2010) claim that for knowledge transfer to be successful and effective, it is important that the source of knowledge recognizes and understands the needs and requirement of the knowledge recipient to enable the knowledge to be transferred in an appropriate and suitable form. It has also been claimed by a number of theorists that the crucial element in the transfer of knowledge is the degree to which the receiver of knowledge is able to acquire and obtain knowledge that is highly useful to him and enables him to use the acquired knowledge in his tasks (Islam, Ahmad and Mahtab, 2010)

2.4 Concept of Culture

There are several alternative definitions of culture, which refer to values, knowledge, attitudes, norms and habits which the members of a given society or a community share and which are common to its members. Schein (2004) defined culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solves its problems of internal integration and external adaptation. A relatively recent study by Steers, Sanchez-Runde and Nardon (2010) concluded

that culture is shared by members of a group who learn through membership in the group by acquiring assumptions, behaviors and values that influence attitudes and the social behavior of group members. Cultural diversity in the workplace is now going beyond its narrow scope, with an emerging paradigm being integration and learning. The latter implies that company's value cultural differences to the extent that they could leverage off the talents of all employees to gain diverse work perspectives (Lockwood, 2005). Given that managing individuals of diverse backgrounds has become an operating reality within organizations, there is extensive literature declaring that businesses are sensitized to the fact that a diverse workforce can extend their capabilities in terms of innovation and sustained competitiveness (Lockwood, 2005). The challenge facing companies wishing to gain a competitive advantage through knowledge management is to create a culture and environment in which knowledge sharing will flourish. With an appropriate culture, knowledge sharing is at best, and most likely to occur (Gold, Malhotra & Segars, 2001). Cultural values play an important role in the way social institutions function. Various studies of cultural values have focused most extensively on nations (Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 2004). Here the cultural values of the business organizations are focused.

2.5 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING:

One of the foremost vital concept for the success of knowledge management and sharing, belonging to the people dimension, is to own a favourable Organization Culture (Yu, et al., 2004; Bhirud, et al., 2005). Organizational culture refers to the basic assumptions that are shared among members in an organization and a learnt as a result of dealing with the corporate environment and solving problems that are a consequence of internal integration and external adaptation. These are taught to the employees as the right way to tackle their problems (Park, Ribiere and Schulte, 2004). An organizational culture that is supportive of the concept of knowledge sharing is more likely to lead to much more effective achievements

because establishing a culture that standardizes and maintains information is crucial for achieving the objectives (Lai and Lee, 2007). Every organization has its own distinct culture which develops over time to reflect on the identity of the organization in two basic dimensions of visible or invisible (Al-Alawi et al., 2007). The visible side of this identity is reflected in the ingrained values and mission of the organization, while the invisible aspect lies in the set of values that direct the actions of the employees in the organization. Al-Alawi et al. (2007), revealed that cultural aspects such as trust between employees, reward system, communication, and organizational structure have a positive relation with knowledge sharing in the organization. Issa and Haddad (2008) are of the view that a presence of trust among workers is extremely important for success in knowledge management. This means that employees will be more cooperative and willing to share knowledge that they have if they feel they can trust the recipient. Some other cultural aspects, like leadership, are also very crucial for success with respect to knowledge sharing (Oliver and Kandadi, 2006).

Other studies on knowledge creation and organizational learning shows that knowledge-sharing activities are strongly influenced by cultural values of individual employees (Jennex, 2006; Hofstede, 2001) and other research also suggested that the performance of an organization depends on the extent to which the organizations cultural values are shared (Lai and Lee, 2007). De Long and Fahey (2000) identified four ways that organizational culture influences knowledge-related behaviours: culture defines assumptions about why knowledge is important; it creates the organizational context for social interactions; it mediates the relationships between individual, team, and organization; and it impacts the adoption and creation of recent knowledge. Ford and Chan (2003) argued that if firms wish to achieve a competitive advantage through knowledge sharing, an acceptable culture and surroundings ought to be in place. Organizational culture has been found not solely influencing the thriving action of data sharing, additionally workers' morale and productivity (Kerr and Clegg, 2007)

Various studies have suggested that organizational culture is highly influenced by the national culture of the place in which the organization is located (Lockwood, 2005). Based on an analysis of IBM employees in 66 countries, Hofstede (1980) proposed a four component model for measuring organizational culture. The four primary dimensions are power distance (PDI), individualism (IDV), uncertainty avoidance (UAI) and masculinity (MAS). National shared culture could be treated as a pragmatic alternative to analysis at an individual level was supported by Lockwood (2005) who argued that even though organizational culture may differ according to the structure, management style of companies and power , the set of regional cultures dimensions is nevertheless valid for most organizations. General support for the model has come from Huang and Newell (2003) while Kerr and Clegg (7 affirmed that Hofstede's work on cultural theories is applicable to knowledge management.

Hofstede's (19 four component model for measuring organizational culture is clearly the most relevant approach for the purpose of evaluating cultural differences and was therefore adapted for this research. Organizational culture is the shared values, beliefs, myths, norms, and assumptions within an organization that also guide employee behavior toward what is desirable and appropriate. The effects of organizational culture on knowledge sharing have been widely studied (Jennex, 2006; Hofstede, 2001) and the consensus appear to be that organizational culture is a critical driver of knowledge sharing.

Alavi, Kayworth and Leidner, (2005) suggest that to develop a knowledge management system and to achieve its objectives an organization requires a change in the corporate culture, for its workers to become knowledge-based workers, and also its activities to knowledge-based, which means creating a culture of knowledge management that support knowledge sharing and value creation and encourage its use.

2.6 FACTORS INFLUENCING KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The activities of knowledge sharing differ significantly among different organizations, as a result of which it has become very important to understand the factors that influence knowledge-sharing. Previous literature shows that there are three basic properties along which these factors can be classified; namely properties of the units, properties of knowledge itself and the properties of the relationship between units (Argote et al., 2003). As far as properties of the units are concerned, researchers have stressed upon the traits of both the source as well as the recipient unit has an impact on the process of knowledge sharing and transfer. In the context of an MNC, scholars have observed that knowledge usually flows in or out of the subsidiary to be a part of several attributes of the units that are involved in the transfer; for instance the motives of the source as well as the recipient units (Coakes, 2006) or the ability to assimilate and absorb the shared knowledge, or the absorptive capacity of the recipients. It could also include the values of knowledge stock of the source unit, as well as the richness and the existence of the sharing mechanisms between the two types of units (Gillingham and Roberts, 2006).

Other researchers, although fully realizing the significance of properties of the units, stress upon the properties of the relationship between these units as well. This can include the closeness in the relationship with respect to higher level of trust, normative integration and shared understanding (King, 2006). As a barrier with respect to the relationship, institutional or cultural distance between units could also result in the creation of stickiness in the knowledge sharing and transfer within the organization. In order to foster a collaborative relationship and to generate relational rents from these relationships, researchers have suggested that regular contacts and recurrent interactions must be practiced. According to Robinson, Carrillo, Anumba and Al-Ghassani (2005) a positive link exists between knowledge acquisition and network embeddedness and this has been acknowledged in the

literature on knowledge sharing. Researchers such as Dhanaraj, Lyles, Steensma and Thianyi (2004) also lay great emphasis on the various properties of knowledge, including knowledge tacitness, knowledge ambiguity and complementarity of knowledge. All of these also act as knowledge-related barriers to knowledge sharing.

The literature on knowledge-sharing among organization reveals that a wide range of barriers related to context, like the problems related to learning in different contexts in alliances and JVs. These factors include goal conflict (McGlynn, 2007) dissimilarity with regard to cultural distance and knowledge compatibility. On examination of the literature on knowledge sharing, a study conducted by Vance and Paik (2005) reveals that knowledge-sharing is facilitated by communication, meetings and visits and from time gone since the acquisition. In differentiated MNCs, the units are situated in different geographic regions, and in this respect, the inter-unit knowledge sharing in cross-cultural and cross-national MNCs resembles knowledge-sharing between firms (to a large extent). These results in studies conducted on the subject of inter-firm knowledge –sharing quite relevant to the study of knowledge sharing in MNCs.

2.7 MNC- AN EFFICIENT VEHICLE FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING

It is generally accepted, in the literature found in the growth or existence of MNCs that the reason behind MNCs existing and growing so rapidly is that they are very efficient in terms of creating and then sharing knowledge across the globe (Foss and Pedersen, 2004). It is also pointed out that the ability to share knowledge efficiently from one unit to some other is an extremely important factor for the emergence of the concept of interconnected MNCs. An MNC is very likely to gain certain advantages with respect to the markets because of their ability to transfer or share knowledge much more readily within interconnected units. This

view, that organizations that are moving knowledge across national borders are more superior to markets, is corroborated by other researchers as well. For instance, it is indicated by Michailova and Nielsen (2006), the organization is a likely alternative to the market for exchange of resource because the presence of shared values facilitates the concept of knowledge sharing. Empirical evidence also suggests that the very superiority of the MNCs originates from their ability not only to use many different mechanisms of knowledge sharing flexibly but also to transfer, integrate and develop knowledge simultaneously. Some other researchers, however, have a different view on how effective knowledge sharing in intra and inter-organizational contexts actually are. For instance, it is argued by McGlynn (2007) that due to geographic proximity, as well as cultural similarity, some aspects of knowledge-sharing may happen more effectively within the subsidiaries of a MNC and a local firm as opposed to between a parent organization and its subsidiaries abroad. While many researchers have theoretically suggested that there are some potential differences that may exist in resource exchange that takes place between inter and intra-organizational relationships or in knowledge-sharing, it has not been empirically explained.

2.8 AGENCY THEORY

The value of subsidiaries is increasing rapidly due to their ability or potential of not only developing knowledge but also the overall competence that leads to the competence development in the MNCs. This knowledge by the subsidiary must be made use of, in a broader sense, by diffusing it in the MNCs. If the valuable knowledge gained by the subsidiary remains within it or is diffused very slowly, the opportunity to leverage is lost. Thus, it is very important for suitable incentives and organizational means to be in place so as to encourage the knowledge sharing from the subsidiaries to the entire MNC. There are also many theoretical justifications and arguments given in the previous literature on the use and

advantages of headquarter control mechanisms in MNCs in the internal knowledge sharing of MNCs. These arguments are well-grounded in the approach of resource dependence and agency theory. From the perspective of resource dependence, due to the fact that the parent organization depends upon its subsidiaries abroad for some very important resources, the former is dependent to a large extent on its subsidiaries (Ordonez De Pablos, 2006). As this dependence of this parent company on the resources controlled by its subsidiary increases, the resource flows between the two also increases and the headquarters consequently wants to gain complete control over its overseas subsidiary (Taylor, M, 2006). This brings out the importance of coordination required for knowledge sharing and resulting aspects like cooperation and control in the relationship between the headquarters and subsidiary within the MNC (Nonaka, 2007).

The agency theory is a concept that explains the agent-principal relationship. Essentially, the relationship between the headquarters and subsidiary of an MNC has the same structure as that of an agent and principal (Vance and Paik, 2005). Therefore, it is not at all wrong to apply the phenomenon of agency theory to study and comprehend headquarters control mechanisms in the knowledge-sharing within the MNC. In the relationship of headquarters and subsidiary, the headquarters (principal), typically delegates most of its work to the subsidiary which acts as its agent. Thus the agent performs its tasks on behalf of the principal (Ordonez De Pablos, 2004). Many of the agency problems in the relationship between the headquarters and subsidiary stem from goal incongruence and divergence of interests between the two parties. In many differentiated MNCs, there may also be difficulties in verifying and monitoring the behavior of the agent, in order to see if it is in congruence with the objectives of the headquarters. For example, in knowledge-sharing, a fundamental problem occurs in terms of motivating the subsidiary to the extent where it is willing to transfer any knowledge that may be of some use to other subsidiaries. It is worth mentioning

that in some cases, the subsidiary may not be reluctant to do so for varied reasons including internal power struggles within the MNC (Ordonez De Pablos, 2006). Because the headquarters is largely dependent on valuable knowledge that the subsidiaries contain, it is very important to design control mechanisms that are optimal and that make subsidiaries act in the interests of the headquarters.

With respect to knowledge transfer, many researchers have also suggested that there are many control strategies that can be made use of in order to achieve alignment between the goals of the headquarters and the actions of the subsidiaries. From the aspect of socialization, for example, Ghoshal and Bartlett (1988) are of the view that the dissemination of subsidiaries' knowledge in the MNC is most likely to be achieved most favorably by means of normative integration. This is an evolution of a very important social mechanism that facilitates the creation of a cooperative and intensive headquarter-subsidiary relationship. These social controls, achieved through shared norms and values, may also be achieved through the process of expatriating staff (Gong, 2003). Another key mechanism for control is the way the rewards and incentive system is designed. A lack of incentives is usually problematic where the internal transfer of tacit knowledge is concerned (McGlynn, 2008). Moreover, output control, which is linked through knowledge sharing to the subsidiary's performance, is most likely to have a positive correlation with the sharing of knowledge related to local markets. Although the importance of headquarters control mechanisms is realized in the literature on international management, very little efforts have been made to empirically examine the impact of these controls on knowledge sharing outside of the subsidiary.

2.9 LOCATION

Scholars believe that one of the significant competitive advantage of any multinational organization is its ability to exploit the locally created knowledge. The main argument behind this belief is that foreign subsidiaries of multinationals in different countries act as an important source of knowledge as they are involved in various value creation activities (Tohidinia and Mosakhani, 2010). However, the degree to which a multinational organization is able to utilize the knowledge created by subsidiary firms depends on number of motivating factors as well. One major challenge that all multinationals face and which limits their ability to exploit knowledge created in a location is the lack of motivation of participants on the recipient side to accept or learn the ‘not-invented-here’ knowledge (Riege, 2005).

The ‘NIH’ barrier which hinders the maximum utilization of the subsidiary knowledge may be a result of the perceived value of the subsidiary’s knowledge. Firstly the knowledge in a subsidiary firm which is acquired in a certain local setting might be highly context bound and tacit. The local knowledge which is embedded in the nature of the subsidiary may be difficult to transfer to the other parts of the multinational firm. Secondly, the marketing literature suggests that the image of a manufacturing nation affects the consumer perception of quality of products from that economy and hence influences the consumer’s propensity to purchase those products. If similar reasoning is applied to the process of knowledge transfer in a multinational organization, the location of subsidiary firm will affect how employees in other parts/units of MNC will perceive the knowledge created and residing in that specific subsidiary. According to Yang, Alejandro and Boles (2011) country’s economic influences has a significant impact on the perception of the value of knowledge base of a subsidiary unit in that specific country. When knowledge flows from an economically or technologically less developed nation to a more developed economy, it might be considered to be of less

commercial value and contextually less sensitive due to high levels of ethnocentrism. The problem of 'not-invented-here' knowledge is therefore more significant when the subsidiary firm is located in a less advanced economy. Hence, the propensity of multinationals to involve in the knowledge sharing process depends on the sender's location as well.

Despite the importance of location in the knowledge sharing process, there is a lack of research in this context. There are only few researches which have linked the subsidiary's location to the knowledge transfer in multinational's. In majority of the studies conducted the location is either considered to an antecedent to broader constructs or is usually kept as a control variable.

2.10 SOCIAL CAPITAL

The literature of knowledge management has dealt with the concept of knowledge sharing by focusing on the appropriation, enrichment and exploitation of the knowledge to enable the technological economic innovation. However, a link between the economics and planning studies in the context of knowledge sharing can be identified by a transversal concept, social capital (Capello and Faggian, 2005). Many researches related to organizational learning has emphasized the role of network linkages and social surroundings in resource exchanges. A Number of scholars have applied the social capital concept to understand how relationships facilitate the creation of value and encourage resource exchange (Adler and Kwon, 2002). Social capital has been conceptualized in literature as a relational resource which is embedded in the social networks in organization to help understand the knowledge transfer process in cooperative relationships. According to Wasko and Faraj (2005), the network of relationships can be considered an inimitable resource itself and also as a means of accessing inimitable resources. Social capital has been defined as the sum of potential and actual resources which are embedded in, available through and is derived from a relationship

network of an individual or a social unit (Inkpen, and Tsang, 2005). Widén- Wulff & Ginman (2004) proposed that social capital is a durable asset of any organization in which resources are invested for future benefits and gains. It provides an advantage to a firm because of an individual's location or involvement in a social structure. Moreover social capital is not always context specific but in fact a network formed may also be transformed into another.

According to the stream of literature present on the concept of social capital, studies have emphasized on the significance of social capital as a valuable resource facilitating cooperative relationships (Wasko and Faraj, 2005). It has been viewed as a facilitator of value creation and resource exchange (Yu and Chu, 2007). Researchers suggest that many aspects of social context can be found under the heading of social capital. These aspects of social capital in the context of relationship include the social interactions between organizations, the quality of relationship depending on the elements of goodwill and trust, and the shared understanding of business practices (Renzl, 2008). Social interaction is related to the degree of normative integration between actors in a relationship. The relationship based on trust is one where the interaction is facilitated by the expectations of reciprocity and goodwill trust. While shared understanding refers to the similarities in the vision of the organizations and the mutual understanding of the business practices. The empirical research indicates that the above attributes if social capital influences the knowledge exchange between the firms.

2.10.1 Social Interaction

In multinational organizations, there is a huge need of knowledge sharing among subunits which requires extensive inter-unit integration and coordination. It is the inter-unit integration which provides a channel for the flow of information as well as other resources. Bock, Zmud, Kim and Lee (2005) identified a positive correlation between the level of innovation in a subsidiary and the degree of normative integration with the parent

organization. He believed that this kind of integration is typically achieved with a high level of organizational socialization and increased social interaction between subsidiary firms and the headquarters, social interaction may occur in joint meeting, mutual visits, team works, task forces and committees. According to the empirical research, there is a positive relationship between the knowledge creation and transfer and social interaction (Chiu, Hsu and Wang, 2006).

A relationship network in an organization acts as an information channel which reduces the amount of time and effort needed to gather information. Knowledge creation and sharing becomes relatively easier and more sustainable when people have strong connections in their workplace. Social interaction between the employees of a virtual community acts as a cost effective method of sharing knowledge (Yu and Chu, 2007). The greater the social interaction is, the higher the intensity, breadth and frequency of the knowledge that is shared.

Social interaction may be an important predictor of knowledge transfer based on the type of knowledge that is to be shared. According to Cabrera and Cabrera (2005), employees are usually more willing to share tangible information if pro-social attitudes and norms of informational ownership exist, but the transfer of intangible of information might be contingent on personal relationships.

2.10.2 Trust

Amongst the several organizational coordination mechanisms, the most popular in the modern knowledge economy is trust. Different studies have identified a positive correlation between the level of trust and cooperative relationship. Studying the antecedents of cooperation, Kim and Lee (2006) mentioned that trust is a significant factor that predicts the intra as well as inter firm cooperation. The review of literature by Small & Sage (2005/2006) emphasized that the role of trust in an organizational setting suggests a direct and moderating

effect that it has on the desired performance and the behavioral outcome variables. In their perspective, trust provides conditions which facilitate the occurrence of certain outcomes. Recently, Van Duijn & Vermunt (2006) made an effort to integrate the literature present on the effect of trust on organizational performance and conceptualized trust as an element through which organizations coordinate and organize their activities. According to Van Duijn & Vermunt (2006) trust affects organizing by shaping the communication and interaction pattern between employees and motivates them to contribute as well as combine these resources.

In the literature focusing on the relationship between knowledge sharing and trust, Little and Ray (2005) identified that trust represents the relational dimension of social capital and encourage the transfer of intellectual capital. They suggested that trust facilitates knowledge exchange and creates conditions necessary for this kind of transfer to take place. This positive association has been empirically supported by a number of researchers in intra and inters firm contexts. In intra-organizational context, Hansen, Mors & Løvås, (2005) found that different aspects of social capital helps in value creation and knowledge sharing process in a multinational organization. Their findings revealed a positive impact of trust on exchange of resources and a creation of intra-firm network. Similarly, Kim and Lee (2006) proposed that within a multinational organization, high levels of trust facilitate transfer of idiosyncratic resources, thus shaping the pattern of different inter-unit linkages.

The foundation for knowledge as well as the knowledge sharing is a trusting and caring environment. When new information is created, individuals by nature will try to monopolize it as it gives them more authority and power. This is also recognized as one of the issues relating to knowledge sharing and one of the biggest challenges that leaders have to overcome. Therefore leaders need to create an environment of trust and commitment which is based on a knowledge vision. In order to create an environment which fosters trust and

commitment, employees need to be motivated to achieve their objectives. One other aspect of trust is integrity which is related to the expectation that employees in a network will behave according to an accepted code of conduct. The working culture in an organization should be selfless and feeling of pride should be discouraged in employees as that would lead to the opposite goal than the one leader is trying to achieve (Little and Ray, 2005).

2.10.3 Shared vision

Previous studies suggest that a shared vision may consist of different aspects of a cooperative relationship. The shared vision concept often refers to the mutual goals, mutual understanding and shared values existing in a cooperative relationship. In the literature of social capital, Du, Ai and Ren, (2007) discussed how relational resources provide a shared system of meanings, shared interpretation and representation among different parties of a social unit. Bock, Zmud, Kim and Lee, (2005) termed these resources 'shared visions'. According to them shared vision of an organization embodies collective objectives and aspirations of the employees within a firm. Shared vision has been identified as a prerequisite for exchange as strategic resources can only be identified and combined when firms have a culture and a system compatible enough to encourage coordinated actions. In an exchange relationship, shared values and mutual understanding facilitate a meaningful communication between employees thus creating conditions for knowledge creation and transfer. According to Van den Hooff and Ridder (2004) shared values and norms increase the level of understanding between members of an organization, which can also be considered as a resource affecting the anticipation of value that is to be achieved through integration as well as the motive to create, combine and share knowledge. Shared vision also plays a significant role in enhancing the absorptive capacity of a firm in the process of knowledge assimilation and enables firms to involve in greater knowledge acquisition. Similar reasoning has also been applied in the context of intra-organizational relationship. Shared goals and values increase the

responsiveness of headquarters to the needs of subsidiary firms which creates a conducive environment and acts as a source of intrinsic motivation in the process of knowledge sharing.

One of an important characteristic of a differentiated network MNC is that apart from hierarchical control mechanisms, normative control and other coordination mechanism are also adapted. The studies which introduced the above perspective focused on a shared sense of organizational goals and vision as a significant element of normative control (Hansen, Mors and Løvås, 2005). Employees are likely to behave in a manner which is compatible with the organizational values when the extent of understanding and identification of shared goals, beliefs, values and norms is high. In a multinational organization, internationalization of views and strategies provide the organization with an identity and this is believed to be a more important control and coordination mechanisms than self-interest or coercion.

2.11 RESEARCH GAP

Whilst the body of knowledge management literature is broad-ranging and constant growing, there appears to be a lack of robust research on the multi and cross-cultural dimensions of knowledge management (Barbara Schmidt-Abbey, 2011). Knowledge sharing is an activity central to knowledge management. For the success of knowledge management initiatives, it is essential to examine what factors may motivate individuals to share knowledge. Research has shown that knowledge sharing is positively related to firm innovation (Liao et al, 2006), increased productivity (Quigley, Tesluk, Locke, & Bartol, 2007), and improved individual and firm performance (Verburg & Andriessen, 2011). The advantages of knowledge sharing have encouraged organizations to invest significant amounts of money and time into knowledge management projects. Even after the allocation of the resources to knowledge management projects, many still fail (Wang & Noe, 2011). One of the reasons for these results may be the lack of attention paid to some of the factors that influence individual's motivation to share

knowledge such as personality traits and diversity. This research aims to fill these gaps by studying and analyzing the various challenges employee face to share knowledge in a culturally diverse organization. In the last decade, a number of attempts have been made in the literature to develop these issues further, but the expected breakthrough has yet to happen (e.g., Works by Holden, 2001, 2008 and 2010). With the increase in information technology usage, many organizations in India have started knowledge management initiatives. Review of available literature on knowledge and knowledge management will lead us to conclude that the majority of the past experience and developments in the area of KM has so far occurred in industrialized western countries (Lai and Chu, 2000; Rubestein-Montano et al, 2001). The condition in Indian societies makes the applicability of KM different from the Western countries and requires further understanding. KM frameworks, which are designed from the experience and the interpretation of cases from Western industrialized countries, need to be tested in a different context. Apart from the few books on KM by Indian authors and a few articles in top Indian management journals, there is no systematic knowledge management research available in Indian context. India is, moreover, a multi-cultural society and most of the MNCs do not understand the diversity and the multi-plural nature of the society and the different stakeholders in this country. This requires a need for extensive research of Indian organizations to develop such framework. Currently there is no framework to support effective knowledge sharing in Indian organizations. In order to realize the benefits of this relatively new “competency” or “discipline” a framework is needed. This research is an attempt in that direction.

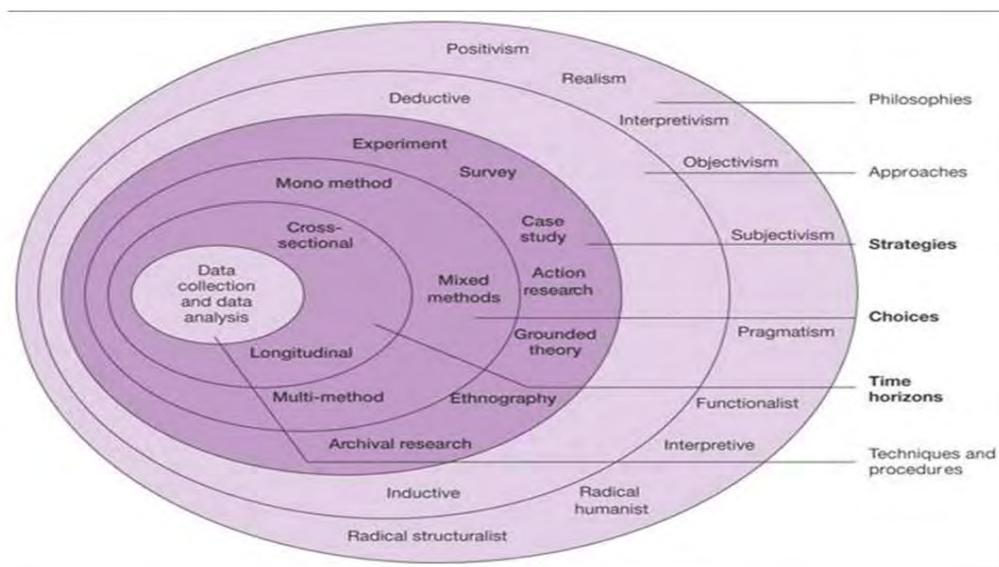
2.12 CONCLUSION

The concept of knowledge management and knowledge sharing has gained momentum in the last few years. As the business environment is becoming more competitive, organizations are looking for innovative ways to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. Apart from the tradition assets, organizations are now considering knowledge as a critical factor which

facilitates the achievement of competitive edge over competitors. Organizations can easily manage the knowledge in their firm through codifying and personalization. Knowledge sharing is considered to be a process through which organizations maintain their tacit knowledge. Knowledge sharing process may also be influenced by the type of knowledge i.e. tacit or explicit knowledge. The achievement of competitive advantage through management of knowledge becomes much more difficult in the case of multinationals. Multinational organizations play an important role in transferring knowledge around the globe. They are able to exploit the advantages of different markets because of their ability to transfer knowledge easily within interconnected units. Although the internal network of multinationals acts as a platform for knowledge transfer, but this does not ensure knowledge sharing. Managers need to inculcate a feeling of commitment, trust, motivation and shared vision in order to promote knowledge sharing process. The literature evaluated for this study will provide a strong base for the testing of hypothesis and ensure that this research fills the gap in the literature.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This dissertation is aimed at evaluating the relationship that exists between the cross-cultural climate and knowledge-sharing within the organization as well as the impact that this climate has on the effective knowledge sharing in the organization. The research methodology is formulated keeping in mind the objectives and the nature of the topic as suggested by Denscombe (2008). This part of the dissertation is pivotal because it presents the strategic map in terms of the methods, techniques and processes used to conduct the research. It is ordered according to the research onion, which according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) includes the research philosophy, approach, strategy, techniques and procedures. The research methodology also contains the analysis of and justification of the research methods used. The need for a clear illustration of the research methodology is stressed upon by Creswell (2007) as a significant strategy to increase the validity and credibility of a research. Hence, the aim of this chapter is to illustrate the methodology of the dissertation and the rationale behind it in a clear and eloquent way.



Source : Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009)

Figure 1: Research Onion

3.1 Research Philosophy:

Different philosophical approaches have been adapted by researchers in order to conduct their research. Research philosophy refers to the belief concerning the way the data for the research is to be collected, analyzed and used. These philosophical assumptions will determine the research strategy and the research methods the researcher chooses as part of their strategy (Saunders et al, 2009). There are three primary research philosophies, primarily positivism, anti-positivism or interpretivism and realism.

The positivist stance is based purely on data that is empirical as well as observable. It has its roots in natural science and one of its primary characteristics involves the testing of the hypothesis from the theory that already exists (Fowler, 2009; Saunder, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). The positivist philosophy is usually used for conducting quantitative research and interpretations are made on the basis of the data collected. Thus the positivists hold that human beings and their nature and actions can be studied as objectively as the natural world. On the other hand, interpretivists are of the view that human beings and their data cannot be studied objectively because each individual is different. Hence, according to the interpretive philosophy, human beings and all the aspects of their lives should be studied subjectively, even though this usually leads to data that is biased and not as accurate as empirical data is. The third research paradigm, realism is a combination of positivism and interpretivism and uses attributes of both these philosophies.

3.1.1 Epistemology: Positivism

The positivist research philosophy is adopted for this research because it makes use of empirical evidence hence making the data accurate and more reliable than data that is subjectively collected. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), environmental factors and social sciences are best studied under the positivist philosophy. Hence, the

positivist philosophy is used in this dissertation. The realist research philosophy could have been adopted but it makes use of both quantitative as well as qualitative research and due to time constraints, this philosophy was overruled. As per the positivist approach, the responses of participants from the MNCs in India were recorded as well as analyzed objectively, using quantitative techniques of data collection.

3.1.2 Ontology: Objectivism

Ontology is the part of the philosophy concerned about the nature of the reality and raises the questions like how the world operates and commits to the particular views. Objectivism is one of the aspects of Ontology which “portrays the position of existing social entities which are external to the social actors” (Saunders et al 9). Objectivism is best option for the potential research because it gives an insight of reality and better understanding of operating within a cross-cultural organisation.

3.1.3 Research Type

Research type refers to the nature of the study, that is, whether the research is exploratory, explanatory, descriptive or causal. This research is exploratory and descriptive in nature as research objective is to explore and describe the challenges that MNCs in India face in terms of knowledge sharing due to their cross cultural environment. Research can be quantitative and make use of statistical tools to quantify empirical data and then use the findings drawn from the sample to infer characteristics of the population. On the other hand, qualitative research does not make use of numerical data and is aimed at gaining insights about phenomena like consumer preferences, trends and human behaviour. Quantitative research is in line with the positivist approach; hence it is used in this dissertation. The rationale behind choosing this is the same as that of choosing the positivist philosophy.

3.2 Research Approach

There are two main types of research approaches that are available to researchers. These are the deductive and the inductive research approaches (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). In a deductive approach the researcher develops a theory and hypothesis and then designs a research strategy to test the said hypothesis. The inductive research approach suggests that the research should start with a formal hypothesis and involves the research making broad generalizations based on specific data. The deductive approach, on the other hand, begins with a generalized hypothesis and its conclusion is drawn out by narrowing this hypothesis to include only those findings that are the most important in the researchers' perspective.

Deductive:

The deductive research approach is availed in this research because it is in line with the nature of the research as well as the positivist philosophy which this dissertation adheres to. Deduction also explains the relationships and past experiences when transforming from theory to data collection. Finally it completes the deduction process by taking the sufficient size of samples (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). There are many theories, models and concepts pertaining to Knowledge sharing and cross-cultural organizations choosing deductive approach gives an opportunity to study and develop a better understanding of various existing theories, approaches and methods currently employed and test these models by applying it to real projects. For the research purpose hypothesis are developed from the existing literature in the knowledge management field and tested.

3.3. Research Strategy

Research strategy refers to the general plan of how the researcher is likely to go about the task of finding answers to the research questions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). In fact, it is the specific road map to the completion of the dissertation. There are several

strategies that are available to a researcher based on the nature of the study, the research type, research philosophy as well as approach. These can include surveys, experiments, case study, grounded theory, etc. This is a quantitative research hence the most commonly used strategy of questionnaire survey is used in this dissertation.

3.3.1 Survey

The Survey research strategy is most suitable as well as popular in business and management research. It is also in line with the type of research because it is inherently apt for exploratory and descriptive research. The survey strategy is closely associated with the deductive approach and it is used to answer the questions like who, how many, where, what, how much. Surveys are used to easily compare for the huge data collection from the sizeable amount of the population by using the questionnaire sample. The survey Strategy is used to collect the quantitative data and it controls the overall research process. Thus, surveys make the data much more representative than other tools like interviews.

The survey research strategy is apt to this research as it facilitates a wide range of data collection and analysis, and according to Bryman and Bell (2003) this is a more suitable alternative to study the behaviour of a large number of people. There will be a number of challenges faced by employees and different perceptions this can be clearly understood by the targeting a large number of respondents through the survey. The benefit of using a survey strategy is that it gives more control over the research process and when sampling is used, it is possible to generate findings that are representative of the whole population at a lower cost. Using the data collection instrument, the survey ensures the good response rate for the research questions and hypothesis designed, thus making the data more representative, unbiased and accurate.

3.4. Research Choice

Mono Method:

Mono method is adopted for the Quantitative research approach which is used for the single data collection technique such as questionnaires (Saunders et. al, 2009). This method of data collection is appropriate for assisting to answer the research question(s). Questionnaire is both time and cost effective. In my research, the main research question aims to explore the challenges faced by employees in a cross-cultural context for an effective knowledge sharing. In this dissertation mono-method is employed, as for the purpose of gathering the data through self-administered surveys. Survey design will only be employed by which the respondent will be issued a questionnaire which they will return to the researcher. This method of data collection is appropriate for assisting to answer the research question(s).

3.5 Time Horizon

Cross-sectional:

The time horizon to research design is the fact whether the research is cross-sectional or longitudinal. Cross-sectional research is *the study of a particular phenomenon at a particular time* (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). It often employs the survey strategy (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Robson 2002, cited in Saunders et al, 2009). On the other hand, longitudinal studies demand much more time for research. The main strength of longitudinal research is the capacity that it has to study change and development. They may be seeking to describe the incidence of a phenomenon or to explain how factors are related in different organizations for example (Saunders et al., 2009). Stemming from limitations created by time constraint placed on the completion of this thesis, cross-sectional survey strategy is used to obtain the data.

3.6 Data Collection

Research data can be primary or secondary, based on what data collection method is used. Primary data is the original, first-hand data that are collected by the researcher for the first time, for the purpose of the research problem at hand. Secondary research, on the other hand, is data that already exists and is previously published.

3.6.1 Secondary Data

Secondary research may not be original and it may not always be for the purpose of the dissertation at hand, it is extremely important for a research. It not only helps to collect existing data to help understand the topic better, but also acts as a preliminary to primary data collection. Many sources were used to collect secondary data which include books, magazines, journals, Internet etc.

3.6.2 Primary Data Collection

Primary data refers to information that is generated first time to meet the specific requirements of the investigation at hand. Primary data is collected from the respondents or the subjects of the experiment. There are various sources of primary data. They are questionnaire, interviews, focus groups, Case Studies, Experiments, observations and surveys. As already mentioned, survey method was adopted to gather primary data for this research, and this will be obtained from the sample within four MNCs in India. A standardized questionnaire was formulated and distributed among 30 employees from each MNC. The questionnaire translates the research objectives into specific questions. The data collection of survey strategy includes the relationship between the variables such as (dependent, independent and controlled variables) to produce the models (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). These questionnaires were emailed to one correspondent from each

MNC, who then forwarded it to his colleagues and staff members and due to the time constraint the questionnaires were distributed to the targeted employees of the IT companies by approaching them in their workplace during free hours.

3.6.3 Sample Size and Sampling

A sample of 30 employees from each of four MNCs was chosen as the sample and the sampling technique used was convenience sampling. In convenience sampling (haphazard or accidental sampling), a sample of units or people is obtained, who are most conveniently available (Zikmund, 2003). The reason behind choosing convenience sampling despite it being a non-probability sampling technique is that it is apt for this research. The employees at the MNCs could not be chosen randomly and their participation was subject to their availability and schedules.

3.7 Data Analysis

Because this is a quantitative research, statistical tools were the main instruments used for analyzing the data collected during primary research. Special statistical software, SPSS was used to organize and interpret the data. This uses patterns in the data to infer about the population represented, accounting for randomness. These inferences took the form of: answering questions about the data (hypothesis testing) in yes/no, estimating numerical characteristics of the data (estimation), describing associations within the data (correlation), modelling relationships within the data (regression), extrapolation, interpolation, or other modelling techniques like ANOVA.

3.7.1 Validity and reliability

In order to assess the credibility of any questionnaire the validity and reliability must be established.

(i) Validity

Polit & Beck (2010) define the validity of a questionnaire as the degree to which the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. The questionnaire should adequately address all aspects of the issues being studied. Face validity and content validity are the validity issues most frequently reported in the literature (Parahoo, 2006).

Face validity checks that the questionnaire seems to measure the concept being tested (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 2010) and to assess this the questionnaire was piloted to a group to see if the questions appear to be clear, relevant and unambiguous (Jones & Rattray 2010).

A content validity test checks that there are enough relevant questions covering all aspects being studied and that irrelevant questions are not asked (Parahoo 2006). A panel of experts is used to evaluate the content validity of new questionnaires (Polit & Beck 2010). The questionnaire was submitted to the supervisor beforehand to check that the questions reflect the concepts being studied and that the scope of the questions is adequate, in the manner proposed by LoBiondo-Wood & Haber (2010).

(ii) Reliability

Reliability is synonymous with repeatability. Reliability refers to accuracy of measurement. Reliability for quantitative research focuses mainly on stability and consistency (Polit and Beck 2010). The stability of a questionnaire is the degree to which it produces similar results on being administered twice. Reliability of a questionnaire refers to its ability to yield the

same data when it is re-administered under the same conditions but it is difficult to obtain a replication of data when you are dealing with people (Robson 2007).

The ideal method to ensure the variation in the answers is to reissue the questionnaire at a later time but given the short span of time of this study carrying out an internal reliability statistical was the most appropriate measure.

Internal reliability refers to whether or not respondent's scores on any one indicator tend to be related to their scores on other indicators. (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

Cronbach's alpha is commonly used to measure internal consistency reliability of a test score such as Likert scales in a questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha is the average value of the reliability coefficients obtained for all possible combination of items when split into two half-tests (Gleim and Gleim, 2003).

Gleim and Gleim, (2003) recommended that it is imperative to calculate and report cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency reliability for any likert-type scale or sub scales in research. The analysis of the data then must use these summated scales or sub scales and not individual items.

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between zero and one. However, there is actually no lower limit to the coefficient. A closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient to 1.0 indicates a greater internal consistency of the items in the scale.

George and Mallery (2008) provide the following rule of thumb with respect to the levels of internal consistency "> .9 = Excellent > .8 = Good > .7 = Acceptable > .6 = Questionable > .5 = Poor < .5 = Unacceptable".

While increasing the value of alpha is partially dependent upon the number of items in the scale, it is important to note that this has diminishing returns. It should also be considered that an alpha of .8 is probably a reasonable goal. A high value for Cronbach's alpha indicates good internal consistency of the items in the scale, and it does not mean that the scale is

unidimensional. Using SPSS software Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal reliability.

3.8. Research Plan

As this study aims to investigate and examine the challenges of knowledge sharing in organizations that bring together a mix of different cultural backgrounds, both secondary and the primary data were used for the analysis. The secondary data is collected through the books, online journals and reports published and the primary data is collected through the structured questionnaires. Hence, the research plan first begins with the detailed review of the literature and then to collect the primary data. The Gantt chart in the appendix 1 illustrates the entire research plan in detail. The costs related to conducting the dissertation research is shown in appendix 2.

3.9 Limitations of the Research

Every researcher has to face some limitations when going about the task of conducting a research. Time is a major limitation factor in this research. In most cases the participants do not complete the questionnaires in time and that makes the research process time consuming. In many cases, the respondents procrastinated in filling the questionnaire. Also, there is always the chance that respondents may have been biased in their responses. Cooperativeness of employee's and their agreeableness to complete the questionnaire was also a limitation factor. Moreover, the study is limited to only the IT sector in India this is one of the limitation factor as different sectors and organizations operating in a cross-cultural context may give varied results. Also, because it is limited only to one industry, its findings may not be applicable to other industries. A broader and more diverse sample might result in different findings. Lastly, the technique of convenience sampling was used which may lead to data

becoming biased or unrepresentative of the entire population. However, it is worth mentioning, that no personal bias interfered with the data analysis and collection process.

3.10 Research Ethics

It is immensely important for researchers to adhere to certain ethics while conducting a research. Ethics in business research refers to a code of conduct or expected societal norm of behavior while conducting research. Ethical behaviors expected from the researcher, apply to the organizations and individuals taking part in the dissertation (Saunders et al., 2009). Saunders et al. (2009), differentiate two dominant philosophical views of ethics in research: the **deontological** view and the **teleological** view. The deontological view assumes that “the ends served by the research can never justify the use of research which is unethical”. In contrast the teleological view argues that “the ends served by the research justify the means” (Saunders et al., 2009. p. 188).

All the participants of the research were duly informed about the purpose of the dissertation as well as the main features, risks and benefits of their participation. Moreover, they were assured that the confidentiality of their responses would be upheld and absolutely no harm would come to them as a result of their participation. Moreover, the identity of the respondents was also kept anonymous. The safest ways to ensure anonymity were adopted by not recording the names of the participants in all categories of sensitive information requiring anonymity such as: preferences or practices; illegal conduct; information that could damage an individual's financial standing, employability, or reputation; any information about an individual's psychology. Also academic honesty was fully practiced and efforts were made to make the text plagiarism-free. Lastly, it was ensured that the data is not distorted or misrepresented in any way.

Chapter 4: Results and Findings

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1 Demographic Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics give a clear understanding to the reader by determining the frequencies and percentages of the responses and understanding the view of respondents towards wither positive direction or negative direction. Following is the analysis of part 1 of the questionnaire:

		Gender			
Respondents		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	71	59.2	59.2	59.2
	Female	49	40.8	40.8	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1: Demographic Information

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	21-25	6	5.0	5.0	5.0
	26-30	38	31.7	31.7	36.7
	31-35	44	36.7	36.7	73.3
	36-40	27	22.5	22.5	95.8
	>40	5	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.2: Demographic Information

		Ethnicity			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Asian	24	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Black	5	4.2	4.2	24.2
	Indian	85	70.8	70.8	95.0
	White	6	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.3: Demographic Information

		Mother tongue			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Hindi	37	30.8	30.8	30.8
	Telugu	51	42.5	42.5	73.3
	English	8	6.7	6.7	80.0
	Other	24	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.4: Demographic Information

		Languages Known			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	11	9.2	9.2	9.2
	2	43	35.8	35.8	45.0
	2+	66	55.0	55.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.5: Demographic Information

		Tenure within the organization			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3-6 months	11	9.2	9.2	9.2
	7-11 months	24	20.0	20.0	29.2
	12-24 months	36	30.0	30.0	59.2
	>24 months	49	40.8	40.8	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.6: Demographic Information

The respondents were predominantly male accounting to 59% of the total sample with different age groups and cultural background. Most of the participants hold an undergraduate degree which accounts for 62% followed by 35% with a postgraduate degree and 41% of them have more than 2 years of work experience in the organization. The results show that the respondents are from different cultures and speak different languages and 55% of them know more than two languages.

4.1.2 Descriptive statistics of knowledge sharing evaluation

What do you think about the concept of knowledge management?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Is a management fad	29	24.2	24.2	24.2
Strategic part of your organization	69	57.5	57.5	81.7
Something that your organization is doing but under a different name	22	18.3	18.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Question 1 Quantitative data analysis

The table above shows that out of 120 respondents, 24.2% of the respondents said that knowledge management is a management fad, 57.5% responded that it is a strategic part of their organization and 18.3% respondents answered that their organizations are practicing knowledge management but under a different name.

What is the current status of knowledge management in your organization?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Introductory phase	64	53.3	53.3	53.3
Growth phase	56	46.7	46.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Question 2 Quantitative data analysis

The table above shows that out of 120 respondents, 53.3% respondents said that knowledge management is in the introductory phase in their MNC and 46.7% answered that it is in the growth phase.

Is knowledge recognized as an asset in your organization?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Disagree	7	5.8	5.8	7.5
	Neither agree nor Disagree	15	12.5	12.5	20.0
	Agree	54	45.0	45.0	65.0
	Strongly agree	42	35.0	35.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Question 3 Quantitative data analysis

A question was asked from the respondents that what is their agreement or disagreement point on a view that knowledge is recognized as an asset in their organization. The analysis show that in most of the organization, knowledge is recognized as an asset in their organizations as 35% respondents strongly agreed and 45% agreed to this statement. On the contrary, 5.8% disagreed and 1.7% strongly disagreed while 12.5% gave a neutral response.

What do you think about the current policies and procedures of knowledge management and knowledge sharing in your organization?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Important, relevant and latest	28	23.3	23.3	23.3
	Important, relevant but not updated	63	52.5	52.5	75.8
	Trivial and part of formalities only	29	24.2	24.2	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Question 4 Quantitative data analysis

A question was asked what they think about the current policies and procedures of knowledge management and knowledge sharing in their organization. Out of 120

respondents, 52.5% respondents believe that knowledge sharing is important, relevant but not updated in their organizations following with 24.2% respondents who believe that knowledge sharing is trivial and part of formalities only and 23.3% respondents said that knowledge sharing is important, relevant and latest in their organizations

There is a free flow of information in your organization.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	10	8.3	8.3	8.3
Neither agree nor disagree	12	10.0	10.0	18.3
Agree	41	34.2	34.2	52.5
Strongly agree	57	47.5	47.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 6: Question 5 Quantitative data analysis

A statement was asked from the respondents that what is their agreement or disagreement point on a view that there is a free flow of information in their organization. The analysis show that in most of the organizations, there is a free flow of information as 47.5% respondents strongly agreed and 34.2% agreed to this statement. On the contrary, 8.3% disagreed while 10% gave a neutral response. The analysis show that there is a free flow of information in most of the MNCs as agreement ratio is 80.7%.

Information to be shared is available in written and documented form.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	5	4.2	4.2	4.2
Neither agree nor disagree	23	19.2	19.2	23.3
Agree	55	45.8	45.8	69.2
Strongly agree	37	30.8	30.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 7: Question 6 Quantitative data analysis

The aforementioned table shows the view of respondents on the practice of knowledge sharing in written and documented form. The results obtained shows that 30.8% respondents strongly agreed and 45.8% agreed that Information to be shared is available in written and documented form in their organizations following with neutral respondents those are 19.2%. However, 4.2% respondents disagreed with the agreed respondents and claimed that information to be shared is not available in written and documented form in their organizations.

What is the average time that it takes for an employee to get relevant information in your firm?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Few minutes	24	20.0	20.0	20.0
Few hours	35	29.2	29.2	49.2
Few days	48	40.0	40.0	89.2
Few weeks or more	13	10.8	10.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 8: Question 7 Quantitative data analysis

The aforementioned table shows that 40% respondents said that it takes few days for an employee to get relevant information in their organization followed by 29.2% respondents who said that it takes few hours and 20% respondents said that its takes few minutes. While, 10.8% respondents said that it takes few weeks or more for an employee to get relevant information in their organizations.

Employees in your organization are encouraged to exchange knowledge on a daily basis.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
Disagree	10	8.3	8.3	10.8
Neither agree nor Disagree	17	14.2	14.2	25.0
Agree	35	29.2	29.2	54.2
Strongly agree	55	45.8	45.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 9: Question 8 Quantitative data analysis

The table above shows the respondents views on “Employees in your organization are encouraged to exchange knowledge on a daily basis”. The results show that out of 1 respondents, 45.8% of the respondents strongly agreed and 29.2% agreed that employees in their organization are encouraged to exchange knowledge on a daily basis. In addition, 14.2% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. Furthermore, 8.3% of the respondents disagreed and 2.5% strongly disagreed with the agreed respondents.

Employees from different cultures, languages and backgrounds are involved in information sharing.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	1	.8	.8	.8
Disagree	10	8.3	8.3	9.2
Neither agree nor Disagree	15	12.5	12.5	21.7
Agree	44	36.7	36.7	58.3
Strongly agree	50	41.7	41.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 10: Question 9 Quantitative data analysis

The table above shows the respondents views on “Employees from different cultures, languages and backgrounds are involved in information sharing”. The results show that out of 120 respondents, 41.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 36.7% agreed that employees from different cultures, languages and backgrounds are involved in information sharing. Additionally, 12.5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. Moreover, 8.3% of the respondents disagreed and 0.8% strongly disagreed with the agreed respondents.

The organizational structure allows employees in your organization to accomplish tasks according to knowledge management services.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	1	.8	.8	.8
Disagree	10	8.3	8.3	9.2
Neither agree nor Disagree	15	12.5	12.5	21.7
Agree	56	46.7	46.7	68.3
Strongly agree	38	31.7	31.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 11: Question 10 Quantitative data analysis

The table above shows that out of 120 respondents; 31.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 46.7% agreed that the organizational structure allows employees in their organization to accomplish tasks according to knowledge management services followed by 12.5% neutral responders. On the other hand, 8.3% of the respondents disagreed and 0.8% strongly disagreed with the agreed responders.

Organizational culture is favorable for information sharing.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	14	11.7	11.7	11.7
Neither agree nor disagree	14	11.7	11.7	23.3
Agree	54	45.0	45.0	68.3
Strongly agree	38	31.7	31.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 12: Question 11 Quantitative data analysis

The table above shows the respondents views on “Organizational culture is favorable for information sharing”. The results show that out of 1 respondents 31.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 45 % agreed that the organizational culture is favorable for information sharing. Moreover, 11.7% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and remaining 11.7 % of the respondents disagreed by saying that organizational culture is not favorable for information sharing.

In your opinion, does knowledge sharing leads to improved performance?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	4	3.3	3.3	3.3
Neither agree nor disagree	23	19.2	19.2	22.5
Agree	47	39.2	39.2	61.7
Strongly agree	46	38.3	38.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 13: Question 12 Quantitative data analysis

An opinion was asked from the respondents on view that knowledge sharing leads to improved performance. The results show that 38.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and 39.2% agreed that knowledge sharing leads to improved performance. Whereas, 19.2% gave a neutral response and 3.3% disagreed that knowledge sharing does not lead to improved performance.

Do you agree with the belief that much of the success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	86	71.7	71.7	71.7
	No	34	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 14: Question 13 Quantitative data analysis

The aforementioned table shows that respondents were asked to give their agreement or disagreement level on the belief that much of the success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing. The results show that 71.7% respondents said yes and they believe that success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing. Conversely, 28.3% said no as they do not believe that success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing.

Which of the following groups are involved in knowledge management practices in your firm?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Human resource	9	7.5	7.5	7.5
	Information technology	29	24.2	24.2	31.7
	Knowledge management unit	41	34.2	34.2	65.8
	Executive management team	21	17.5	17.5	83.3
	Documentation centre	20	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 15: Question 14 Quantitative data analysis

The table above the involvement of different groups in knowledge management practices in MNCs. Out of 120 respondents, 34.2% of the respondents answered that knowledge management unit is inviolate in knowledge management practices in their firm followed by 24.2% and 17.5% respondents say that informational technology group and

executive management team are involved in knowledge management practices in MNCs. Likewise, 16.7% of the respondents said that in their organization, documentation center is involved in knowledge management practices and 7.5% said that human resources is involved in knowledge management practices in MNCs.

What is the biggest barrier that hinders the process of knowledge sharing?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Functional silos	11	9.2	9.2	9.2
Lack of participation	21	17.5	17.5	26.7
Unwillingness to share information	30	25.0	25.0	51.7
Lack of trust	16	13.3	13.3	65.0
Lack of training	26	21.7	21.7	86.7
No incentives or rewards for sharing knowledge	16	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 16: Question 15 Quantitative data analysis

In knowledge sharing process, there are some barriers that hinder its process. The table above shows different barriers ranked by respondents that hinder knowledge sharing process in their organization. Out of 120 respondents, 25% respondents said that the main barrier in knowledge sharing process is the unwillingness to share information followed by “lack of training” which is opted by 17.5% of the respondents. In addition, 17.5% respondents said that lack of participation is the barrier in their organization, 13.3% said that lack of trust is the barrier and 13.3% said that “no incentives or rewards for sharing knowledge” is the barrier than hinders the process of knowledge sharing in their organization. Only 9.2% of the respondents said that functional silos hinder knowledge sharing process.

4.2 Inferential Statistics

The inferential statistics is carried out by using Pearson Correlation and Regression Analysis for determining the relationship and impact of independent variables on dependent variable.

4.2.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Correlations

		knowledge sharing	Employees from different cultures	organizational structure	Organizational culture
knowledge sharing	Pearson Correlation	1	.473(**)	.564(**)	.576(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120
Employees from different cultures	Pearson Correlation	.473(**)	1	.494(**)	.475(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120
organizational structure	Pearson Correlation	.564(**)	.494(**)	1	.629(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	120	120	120	120
Organizational culture	Pearson Correlation	.576(**)	.475(**)	.629(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	120	120	120	120

Table 17: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation is the demonstration of intensity and direction of relationship between dependent and independent variables. The positive value shows a positive correlation and negative value show a negative correlation. The intensity depends on the value; if it is closer to 1 it indicates highly significant, direct and positive correlation and nearer to zero means weak positive correlation. The Pearson correlation value shows that knowledge sharing and cultural differences have a highly significant, strong, direct and positive correlation as value is 0.473. Moreover, knowledge sharing also holds strong and positive correlation with organizational culture as Pearson correlation value is 0.576. The correlation value between knowledge sharing and organizational structure is 0.564 indicating strongly positive and direct correlation.

4.2.2 Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.651(a)	.424	.409	.82866

Table 18: Regression Analysis

The table of model summary indicates the explanatory power of the model. The absolute value correlation is determined by R value. The correlation among all the variables is 0.651. It means that the model has strength as absolute value correlation is high. R square is the coefficient of determination. R square is 0.424, which means that 42.4% of the variation is explained through this model, and 57.6% variation is unexplained.

ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	58.671	3	19.557	28.481	.000(a)
	Residual	79.654	116	.687		
	Total	138.325	119			

Table 19: ANOVA

The table of ANOVA tells the significance of the model. It helps in the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis. According to rule of thumb, if F calculated value is greater than F tabulated value, the null hypothesis is rejected else accepted. The aforementioned table shows that F calculated value is 28.481 and F tabulated value is 2.6802; it shows that the null hypothesis is rejected and it is known that the cultural differences, organizational culture and organizational structure have a significant effect on the knowledge sharing in MNCs.

The p value of F statistic also accepts or rejects the null hypothesis if p value is less than alpha (0.05). The p value is 0.000, it shows that the model is significance and the above mentioned variables are significantly affecting on knowledge sharing in MNCs.

Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.534	.396		1.351	.179		
	organizational structure	.318	.110	.273	2.888	.005	.555	1.802
	Organizational culture	.355	.106	.314	3.358	.001	.568	1.759
	Employees from different cultures	.209	.093	.189	2.263	.025	.711	1.406

Table 20: Coefficients

The sig value of t statistic accepts or rejects the null hypothesis. The sig value of organizational structure is 0.0054 means this variable is a significant variable that affects the knowledge sharing. Similarly, sig values of organizational culture and cultural differences are 0.001 and 0.025. It shows that alternative hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 are accepted. Moreover, T and VIF are the multi co-linearity indicators. The value of T closer to 1 means high co-linearity and value of VIF closer to 10 means high-multi co-linearity. The T value of cultural difference is 0.711 showing that this variable is highly predicted by other independent variables. The other two variables have lesser multi co-linearity. Following is the regression equation:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.534 + 0.318(\text{Organizational structure}) + 0.355(\text{Organizational culture}) + 0.209(\text{Cultural difference})$$

The above equation is interpreted as; with an increase in effectiveness in organizational structure by 1%, the knowledge sharing will increase by 0.318%. Similarly, with an increase in effectiveness of organizational culture, knowledge sharing will increase

by 0.625%. Lastly, with increase in cultural differences among employees, knowledge sharing increases by 0.209%.

4.3 Reliability Analysis

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.773	3

Table 21: Reliability Statistics

The value of Cronbach's alpha for reliability analysis is .773 it means that the instrument that have used has internal consistency and Likert Scale used in the questionnaire is reliable. According to rule of thumb if cronbach's alpha is greater than .7 the scale used in survey or questionnaire holds internal consistency. The obtained value is $0.773 > 0.7$, it means that the scale used in this research holds high internal consistency and can produce repetitive results.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The results drawn in chapter 4 indicate that knowledge sharing is an important practice that is practiced by the MNCs in India. The analysis of the questionnaire is as follows.

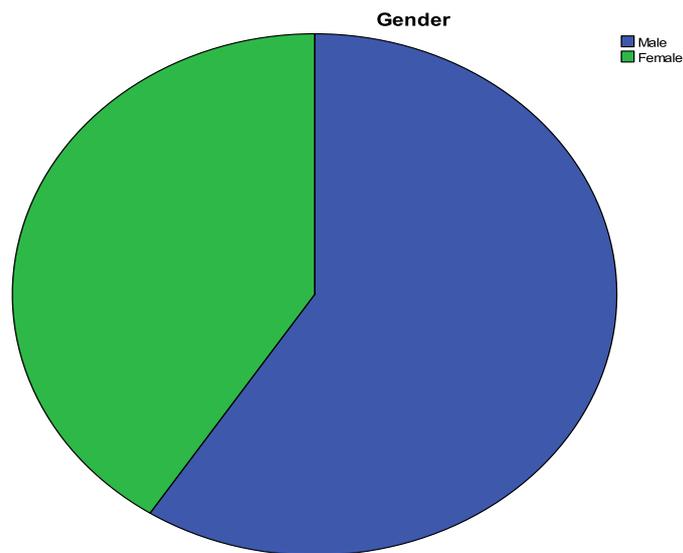


Figure 2: Gender

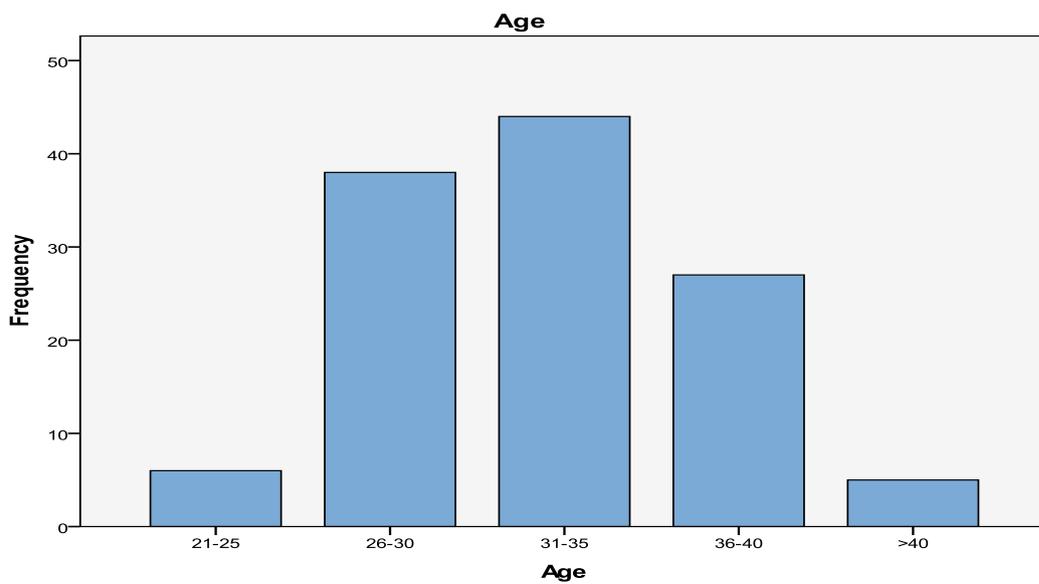


Figure 3: Age

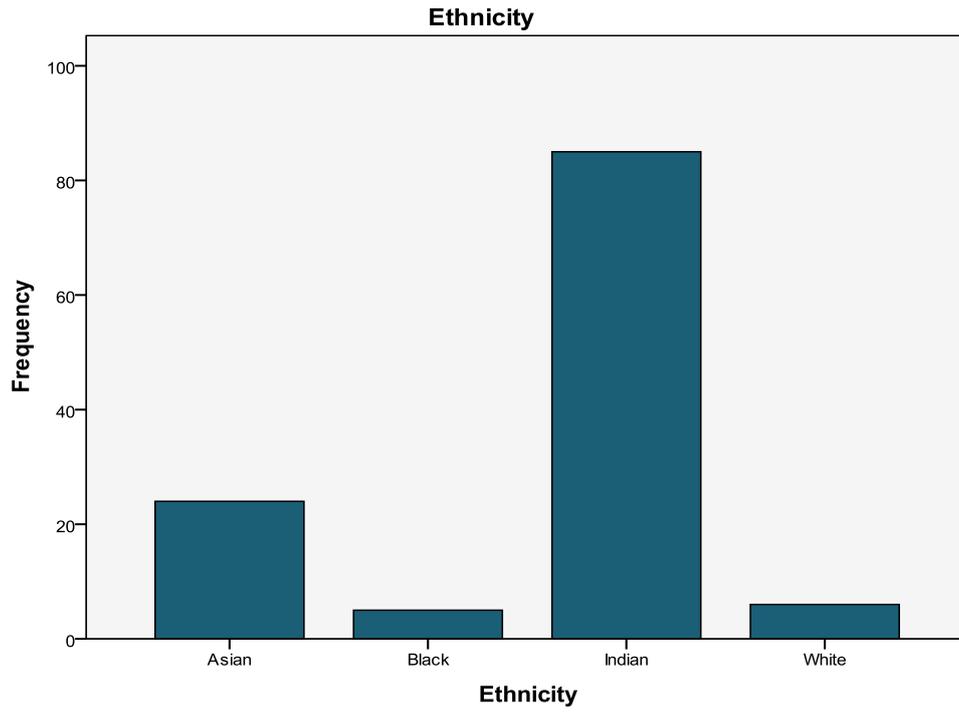


Figure 4: Ethnicity

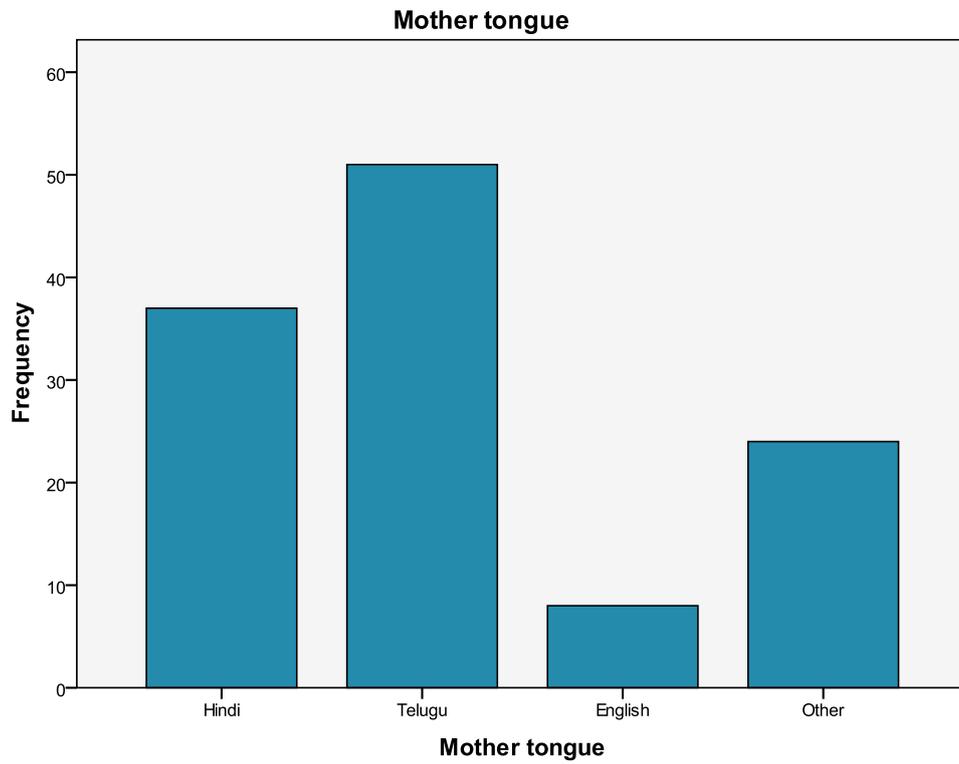


Figure 5: Mother tongue

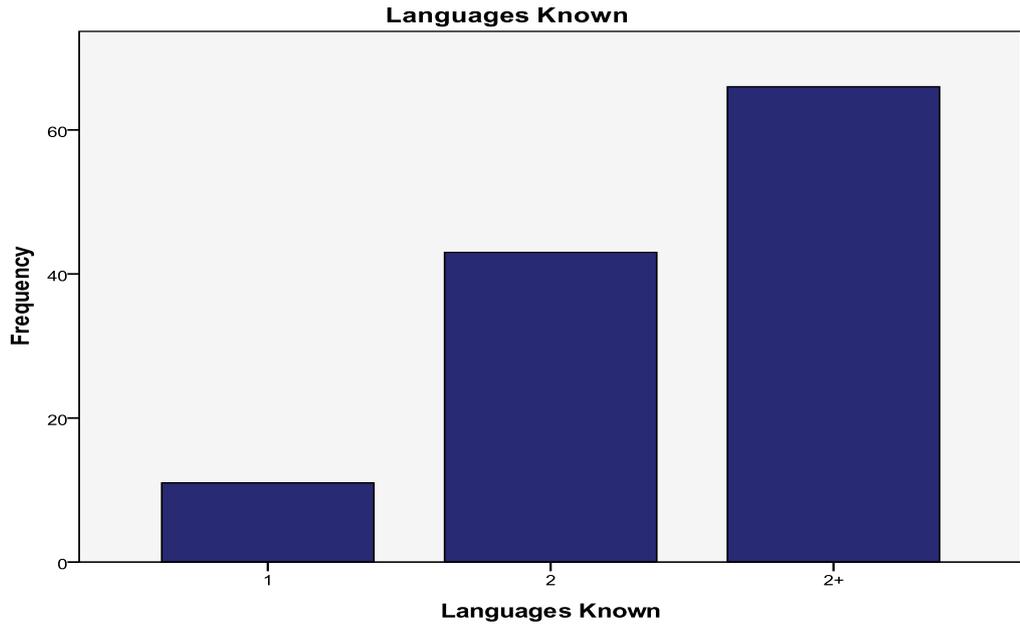


Figure 6: Languages Known

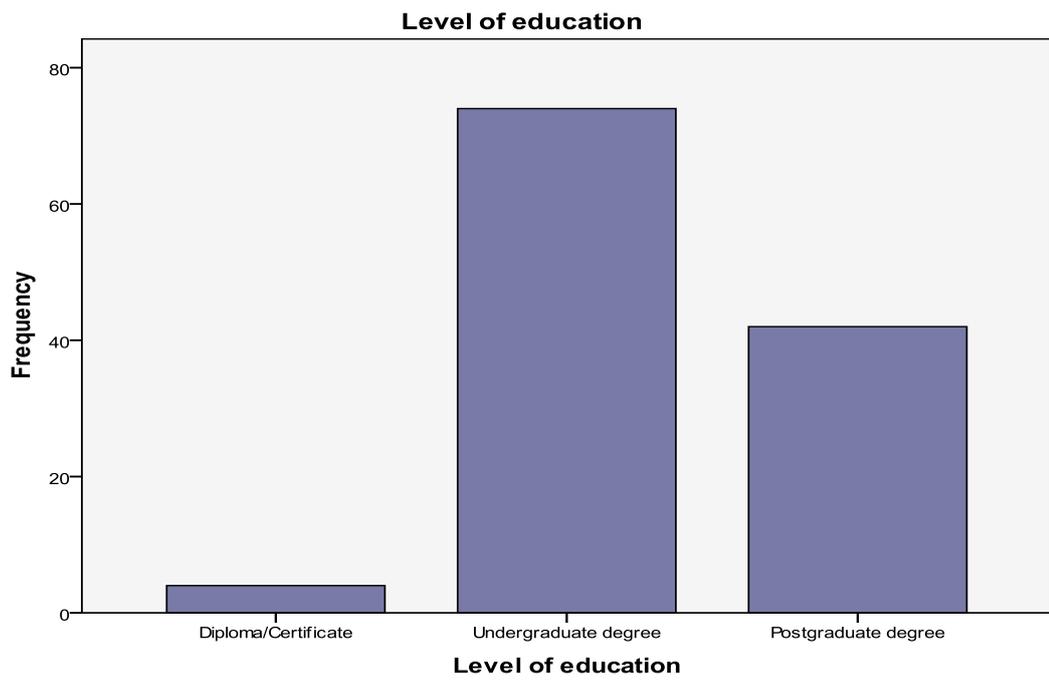


Figure 7: Level of Education

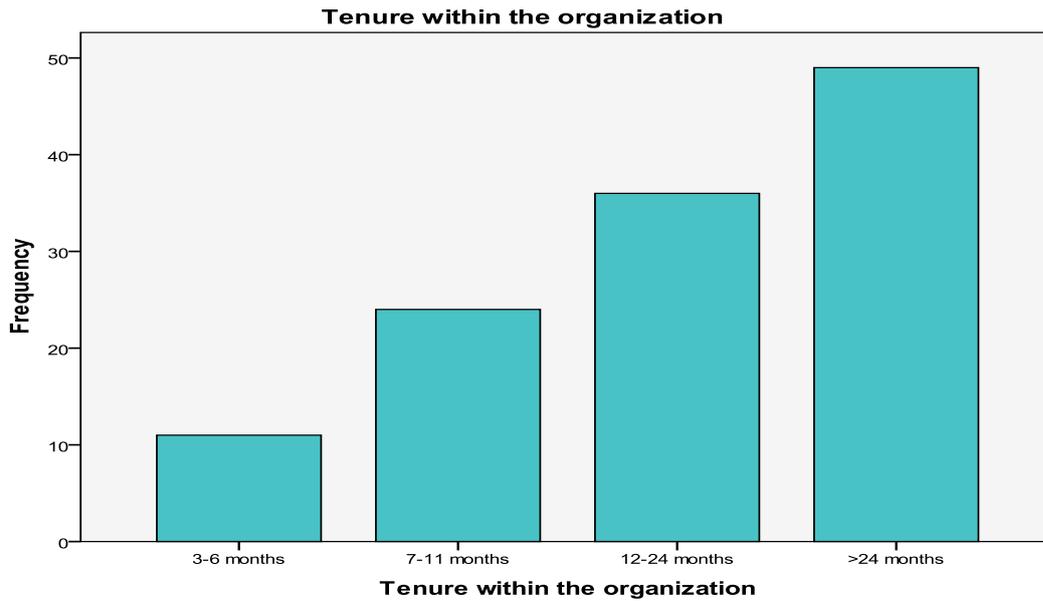


Figure 8: Tenure within the organization

The demographic details of the questionnaire ensure that a diverse population has been selected to conduct the survey. As the main objective in dealing with the dissertation is to know the challenges of knowledge sharing in intercultural organization, it is necessary to capture the ideas of different age group, different origin and different dialects to give the best possible answers for the research question. All the above pie and bar charts helps to describe that the sample selected for the survey is diverse.

The analysis of the questionnaire show that 57.5% of the respondents said that knowledge management is a strategic part of their organization. This finding is clear and supported by Storey (2010) who stated that knowledge management is a strategic practice that is adopted by the organizations that is impacting on the goods and services offered to the customers. It is a source of competitive advantage for the organizations. Thus, knowledge management has now become a strategic part of the organizations. Furthermore, the 46.7% respondents answered that knowledge management is in the growth phase and 53.3% said that it is in the introductory phase. The literature reveals that both growing and mature firms practice knowledge management at different stages including maturity stage. It is because

knowledge management gives a success to the organizations. It is the main reason behind the success of MNCs as MNCs diffuses the knowledge across the organization. Moreover, MNC share knowledge from one unit to other in an efficient manner that raised the concept of interconnectedness.

The analysis show that % respondents agreed and strongly agreed that knowledge is recognized as an asset in their organization. According to ennet and Bennet (2008), knowledge is recognized as an asset of the organization as it is leading to competitive advantage for the organization. The organizations are dependent on the social capital. It has become a durable asset of the organization. The analysis of this study is further supported by the views of Yu and Chu (2007) and Wasko and Faraj (2005) that is social capital is a valuable resource facilitating cooperative relationships and it is a facilitator of value creation and resource exchange. The elements of social relationship in sharing knowledge include goodwill, trust and business practices understanding. It creates mutual understanding and influence knowledge sharing across the firm.

Furthermore, 81.7% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that there is free flow of information in their organizations. In knowledge management, the knowledge is sharing across the organization from top to bottom and right to left. This finding is supported by the research of Taylor (2006) stating that in MNCs there is knowledge sharing among subunits which improves coordination and social integration. Thus, the unit integration provides a free flow of information and other resources across the organization. It increased the dependence of the parent company on its subsidiaries and the flow of resources increased between the two and a complete control was gained by the headquarters over its subsidiaries.

The analysis show that 76.6% of the respondents said that in Indian MNCs information to be shared is in written and documented form. It means that the information is understood by the employees that increase knowledge sharing across the units in the

organization. Likewise, Little and Ray (2005) researched that explicit knowledge transferred in written form is easily understood by all. The knowledge is transferred in the form of manuals, books and formulas and is easily shared among individuals. Similarly, MNCs in India share information via documents.

Ahmad and Daghfous (2010) claimed that knowledge transfer is successful when the knowledge is shared by recognizing and understanding the needs of recipients to enable knowledge transferred in an appropriate manner. The main elements in the knowledge sharing are the degree of acquisition of knowledge and obtaining knowledge that is useful for employees to perform tasks. For this information sharing and adoption takes some time and cannot be transmitted within seconds. This point supports our findings that is 40% of the respondents said that employee takes few days to get relevant information in Indian MNCs. It is also noticed that it takes few minutes and few hours for employees to get relevant information. However percentage of “few days” is high; it means that knowledge is shared in an effective manner by recognizing the needs of the employees.

The results show that out of 120 respondents, 45.8% of the respondents strongly agreed and 29.2% agreed that employees in their organization are encouraged to exchange knowledge on a daily basis which accounts for 75% respondents believe that employees are encouraged to exchange knowledge on a daily basis in MNCs in India. According to Powell (2004), knowledge sharing increases the competency, growth opportunities, success and survival of organization as knowledge sharing among employees accumulates new information by eliminating the obsolete information. The exchange of information among individuals leads to attain and sustain competitive advantage. It has been claimed that organizations practicing knowledge sharing achieved competencies.

Moreover, 78.4% of the respondents said that employees from different cultures, languages and backgrounds are involved in information sharing in MNCs in India. India is a

country where different people live belonging to different ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, India was chosen to know the knowledge sharing management. It shows that India is promoting diversity by giving importance to the personal values of employees. It has been observed that aspects such as trust between employees, reward system, communication, and organizational structure have a positive relation with knowledge sharing in the organization. Hence, MNCs in India is integrating the employees in knowledge sharing process. According to Park et al. (2004), the social integration helps employees to tackle the problems, dealing with the corporate environment and solving problems. It is known that each individual possess some skills and knowledge and when all skills and knowledge mix together, it creates a unique information that is transmitted in producing a product or service that satisfies the customers. Thus, people having different cultural background have skills those are valuable for achieving a competitive edge over the competitors.

It has been found that 31.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 46.7% agreed that organizational structure allows employees in their organization to accomplish tasks according to knowledge management services followed by 12.5% neutral responders. On the other hand, 8.3% of the respondents disagreed and 0.8% strongly disagreed with the agreed responders. This finding is supported by the past researches that organizations must review their technological infrastructure to support the process of knowledge sharing. The study of organizations allows employees to accomplish the task by sharing knowledge. In some organizations, there is a tall structure where there are many management layers and employees cannot interact with others. On the other hand, some organizations have flat structures where there are few management layers. In flat structured organizations, information is easily shared and employees feel motivated and empowered as they have the authority to share information (Lockwood, 2005).

The analysis show that 31.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 45 % agreed that organizational culture is favorable for information sharing. Our finding is supported by the findings of Lai and Lee (2007) revealing that organizational culture is supportive in the context of knowledge sharing for attaining effective achievements because establishing a culture that standardizes and maintains information is crucial for achieving the objectives. The organizational culture has a mission and set of values that effect on the actions of the employees. A culture that promotes trust and cooperation is the best working environment as trust among workers is extremely important for success in knowledge management. This means that employees will be more cooperative and willing to share knowledge that they have if they feel they can trust the recipient. It is known that employees' morale productivity satisfaction, trustworthiness and cooperation is increased by the influence of culture of the organization. It had been suggested by Alavi, Kayworth and Leidner (2005) that a knowledge management system must be developed to achieve objectives of an organization by bringing a change in the corporate culture and encouraging information sharing and value creation among employees.

It is analyzed that 77.5% of the respondents believe that knowledge sharing improves the performance. This finding is supported by the previous work of McGlynn (2008) stating that improved organizational learning results in increased organizational performance and provides more opportunities for gaining competitive advantage. Hence, there is a positive correlation between knowledge sharing and organizational performance. In addition, Wang and Noe (2010) have highlighted several advantages of knowledge sharing that are reduced production costs, completion of new projects in a shorter time, improved team performance, higher innovation and higher performance in terms of improved sales, growth and revenue.

The respondents were asked to give their agreement or disagreement level on the belief that much of the success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing. The results show

that 71.7% respondents said yes, and they believe that success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing. Conversely, 28.3% said no as they do not believe that success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing. The past work of Little and Ray (2005) demonstrated that knowledge sharing is the key to success and keep enhancing it as individuals are not restricted to specific knowledge of performing their tasks. It is already mentioned above that transference of knowledge improves opportunities of success, survival and growth.

The analysis of barriers hindering the process of knowledge sharing shows that 25% respondents said that the main barrier in knowledge sharing process is unwillingness to share information; 21.7% opted for lack of training; 17.5% respondents said that lack of participation is the barrier in their organization, 13.3% said that lack of trust is the barrier and 13.3% said, “no incentives or rewards for sharing knowledge”; and 9. % of the respondents said that functional silos hinder knowledge sharing process. According to King (2006), the main barrier in knowledge sharing is unwillingness to share information.

The Pearson correlation analysis shows that knowledge sharing and cultural differences have a highly significant, strong, direct and positive correlation as value is 0.473. Moreover knowledge sharing also holds strong and positive correlation with organizational culture as Pearson correlation value is 0.576. The correlation value between knowledge sharing and organizational structure is 0.564 indicating strongly positive and direct correlation. These results are supported by the findings of Chiu, Hsu and Wang (2006), Kim and Lee (2006) and Al-Alawi et al. (2007). The findings of these authors reflected that there is a positive relationship of knowledge sharing with trust between employees, reward system, communication, and organizational structure. Furthermore, organizational culture and knowledge sharing shares positive relationship as there is a positive relationship between the knowledge creation and transfer and social interaction. In addition, knowledge sharing is increased with the cultural differences among employees as different employees contribute

different information. The previous studies have identified a positive correlation between the level of trust and cooperative relationship.

The sig value of t statistic accepts or rejects the null hypothesis. The sig value of organizational structure is 0.0054 means this variable is a significant variable that affects the knowledge sharing. Similarly, sig values of organizational culture and cultural differences are 0.001 and 0.025. It shows that alternative hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 are accepted that is there is a positive effect of knowledge sharing on organizational culture, organizational structure and cultural differences among employees. The regression equation shows that with an increase in effectiveness in organizational structure by 1%, the knowledge sharing will increase by 0.318%. Similarly, with an increase in effectiveness of organizational culture, knowledge sharing will increase by 0.625%. Lastly, with an increase in cultural differences among employees, knowledge sharing increases by 0.209%. The findings of Chiu, Hsu and Wang (2006), Kim and Lee (2006) and Al-Alawi et al. (2007) support the regression results as these authors have found a positive relationship among these variables which indicates that organizational culture, organizational structure and employee cultural differences are the driving forces of knowledge sharing that enhances the process or hinders it depending on its association.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Summary and Conclusion of Research

The research is concluded as organizational knowledge can be a main source of developing sustainable competitive advantage. The field of knowledge management is gaining attention of several academic scholars as knowledge is the most important aspect in any organization. Knowledge management is now believed to be one of the most significant parts of any organization which is complementary for the business activities. It is leading towards the achievement of competitive advantage. The continuous process of knowledge sharing leads to sustain the competitive advantage. The concept of organizational learning can be improved through effectiveness knowledge capturing, creation and sharing. Improved organizational learning ultimately leads to increased organizational performance and provides more opportunities for gaining competitive advantage. It makes an organization adaptable and learns faster by actively responding to the needs of the society as well as of employees. A business can identify the opportunities in the market and threats that can be lessened by converting opportunities into strengths. By constantly scanning the environment, organization absorbs extensive and relevant information that is further to use to process it for producing an output through the diffusion of knowledge. It is known that strategic management of knowledge leads to sustainable competitive advantage as it is most costly and return generating resource.

An important aspect of knowledge management is knowledge sharing that is essential for the functioning of an organization as knowledge sharing is a significant factor in determining the relative competitiveness of the organization.

This research is conducted in India as India is a big country comprising several cultures as people belonging to different cultural backgrounds reside there. This research provides an understanding of how the corporate culture and structure of the organization

impacts the notion of knowledge sharing among employees that belong to different cultural backgrounds. The prime focus is on the multinational corporation operating in India as MNCs have numbers of employees belonging to various cultural backgrounds. A sample size of 4 MNCs is taken and each MNC will be approached for gaining information from 30 respondents. The respondents were the managers and employees working in MNCs in India.

The main objectives of this research were to identify the impact of organizational culture on knowledge sharing; impact that organizational structures have on knowledge sharing in multinational corporations; how knowledge sharing is perceived in intercultural organizations; extent to which multinational organizations in India follow knowledge sharing practices; challenges of knowledge sharing faced by the employees working in multinational corporations operating in India; and role of leadership in enabling cross cultural knowledge sharing. These objectives of the research were covered by the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained through descriptive and inferential statistics.

The collected information was statistically analyzed by using descriptive analysis and inferential statistics. The descriptive analysis shows that highest observation selected by the respondents means the option that is chosen by most of the respondents. The inferential statistics determine the relationship between independent variable and dependent variables (Pearson correlation analysis) and impact or effect of independent variable on dependent variable (regression analysis).

The descriptive analysis shows that 57.5% respondents think that knowledge management is a strategic part of their organization. In India, knowledge management exists as 53.3% respondents said that knowledge management is in the introductory phase in their MNC and 46.7% answered that it is in the growth phase. In Indian MNCs, knowledge is recognized as an asset as 80% respondents show an agreement with this statement. In India, there is free flow of information in MNCs as 47.5% respondents strongly agreed and 34.2%

agreed to this statement. Knowledge sharing among subunits improves coordination and social integration. The written and documented information is easy to understand. In India, MNCs share information in written and documented form as 30.8% respondents strongly agreed and 45.8% agreed.

In MNCs, information is effectively disbursed by knowing the needs of employees and it is a gradual process that results in long term profitability, productivity, growth and success. The analysis revealed that 40% respondents said that it takes few days for an employee to get relevant information in their organization. In MNCs, employees are encouraged to exchange knowledge on a daily basis. Knowledge sharing is an important aspect that leads to successful business as by sharing knowledge, people come across many ideas that result in formation of unique products or services that satisfies the customers. The customer satisfaction results in profits and healthy revenues of the company. The multinational corporations operating in India are promoting diversity by involving employees to share their knowledge. The results show: 41.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 36.7% agreed that employees from different cultures, languages and backgrounds are involved in information sharing.

The structure of organization is involved in knowledge sharing. Some organizations have mechanistic structure and some have organic structure. In organic structure, there is low formalization. The employees do not need to follow formal rules for carrying out activities and professionals can apply their own techniques to solve the issues. The specialization is high social means there are no standard rules. There is low formalization and centralization. The organic structure is based on decentralization. Information flows from bottom to up. The higher authorities consider the opinions and views of employees also before making any decision. The decision is made by the cooperation of all employees. These organizations welcome innovations, and they are dynamic. These organizations compete in the market by

constantly adapting the latest technology to meet the demands of the customers. In India, MNCs are using this structure as 31.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 46.7% agreed that organizational structure allows employees in their organization to accomplish tasks according to knowledge management services.

The overall regression analysis shows that there is a significant contribution of organizational culture, organizational structure and employee cultural differences on knowledge sharing. It is proved from the statistical findings: F calculated value is 28.481 and F tabulated value is 2.6802; it shows that the null hypothesis is rejected and it is known that the cultural differences, organizational culture and organizational structure have a significant effect on the knowledge sharing in MNCs. In addition, p value is 0.000, it shows that the model is significance and organizational culture, organizational structure and employee cultural differences are significantly affecting on knowledge sharing in MNCs. It further proved that there is a direct relationship as regression equation has positive signs of all the variables.

6.2 Limitations and ethical considerations

The limitations faced in this research are many. First, time was the main limitation. Due to short span of time, small sample size was selected that is 4 MNCs and 30 employees from each MNC. Thus, the obtained results may not be accurate and does not reflect deep insights as numbers of employees were less to share their ideas. Next, information accuracy is the limitation. The employees may give wrong information on the practice of knowledge sharing just to hide that knowledge management is not practiced in their organization. It could have led to wrong results and inappropriate interpretations. Another limitation was that the selected MNCs may have not shared valuable information that could have been shared by other MNCs in India.

This research considered ethical issues also by following the rule of confidentiality and informed consent. The researcher ensured that no offensive words were used in the questionnaire and no respondent was forced or coerced into filling in the questionnaire. The respondents themselves chose to participate in the study. Verbal consent was gained from the respondent before handling them the questionnaire. No personal data about the respondents was used for any purpose other than for this study and complete anonymity was maintained. The personal information provided by the respondents was kept confidential.

6.3 Recommendations

Following are some recommendations made by the researcher on the basis of analysis and findings drawn:

1. It is found that 52.5% respondents believe that knowledge sharing is important, relevant but not updated in their organizations; 24.2% respondents who believe that knowledge sharing is trivial and part of formalities only and 23.3% respondents said that knowledge sharing is important, relevant and latest in their organizations. Thus, MNCs in India are recommended to update the information and share knowledge on continuous basis to eliminate the obsolete information and rapidly absorb opportunities to sustain its competitive edge over the competitors.
2. The analysis show that out of 120 respondents, 25% respondents said that the main barrier in knowledge sharing process is unwillingness to share information followed by “lack of training” which is opted by 21.7% of the respondents. In addition, 17.5% respondents said that lack of participation is the barrier in their organization, 13.3% said that lack of trust is the barrier 13.3% said that “no incentives or rewards for sharing knowledge” is the barrier than hinders the process of knowledge sharing in their organization and 9.2% of the respondents said that functional silos hinder knowledge sharing process. Hence, it is recommended that MNCs in India should

remove these barriers that hinders the process of knowledge sharing by building trust and cooperation among employers-employees and employees-employees.

3. It is recommended that for removing the barriers, employers must take initiatives by bringing change in the organization and educating employees about the change that how diffusion of information is necessary and how it should be shared. The manager is responsible for learning the employees by using participative leadership style to empower the employees and motivate them by incorporating the views of employees in decision making process. In participative leadership style, a leader cooperates with the employees and supports them by enhancing their skills and knowledge for achieving the goals of the organization. A leader appraises the performance of employees and motivates them to produce effective results.

6.4 Reflective Summary

This journey of research was a knowledge enhancer journey for me. It gave me an immense knowledge and cleared my concepts regarding the knowledge management and knowledge sharing. This concept is a revolving issue in the business world as knowledge is the main base of producing goods and services. Knowledge management is a wide concept and practiced by technology firms as these organizations are mostly flat structured. This research enhanced my knowledge regarding the concept “knowledge sharing”. I have recognized the value of knowledge sharing and the role of culture and structure of organization. I faced difficulties in gathering data due to shortage of time but I followed sequential planning by dividing the tasks and time period to reach the goal of my study. In short this journey of theoretically experiencing knowledge sharing; the research has boosted my confidence in communicating with others and resolving their issues and forming good relationships. It also gave me a sense of treating people equally by promoting the diversity. I have discovered that in today’s world knowledge sharing is a breath of the organization that

gives it a life by partnering and collaborating with others to attain competitive edge over others in the market. My skills and knowledge got structured and enhanced by working on this dissertation.

6.5 Possible areas for future research

Future research studies could also use qualitative data to compliment the current research. Time-series analysis can be used to test the reliability and validity of the research. In the current dissertation only a single sector industry was used, future studies may include different industries.

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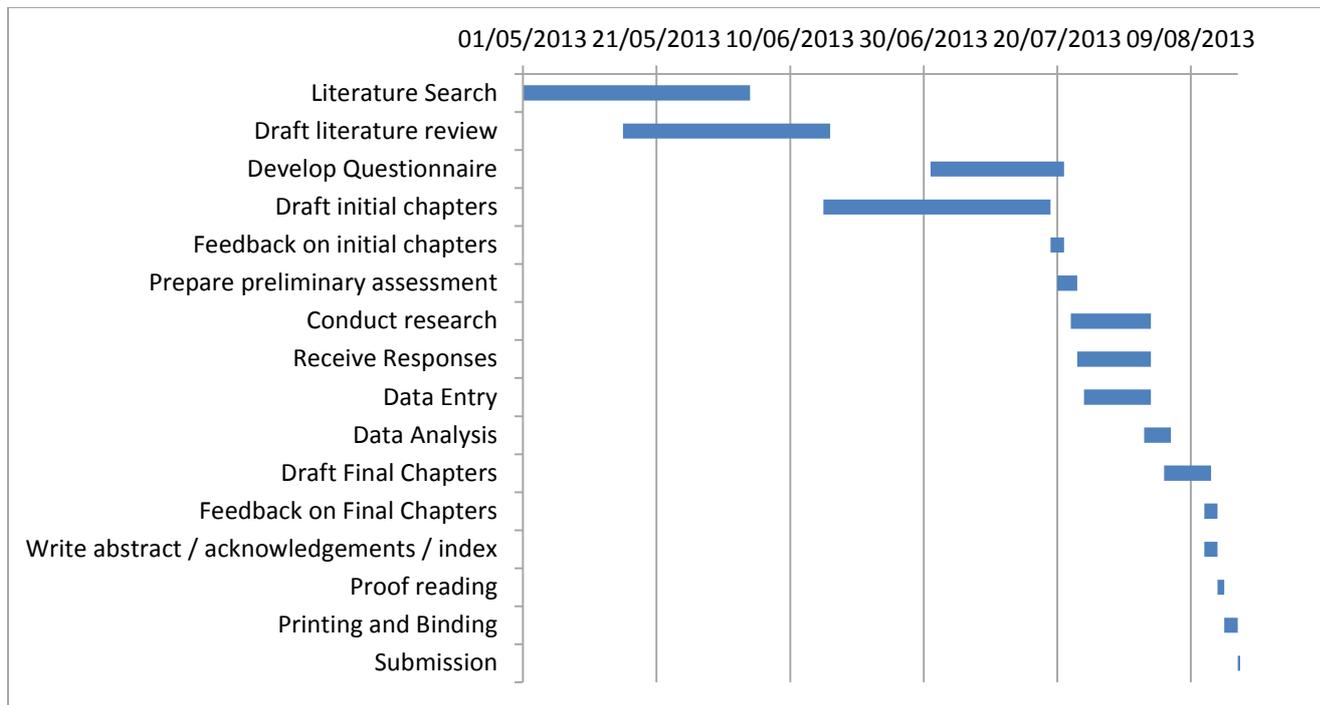
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Appendix: 1

Gantt chart to illustrate



Appendix: 2

List of Expenses	Amount in Rs.
Questionnaire Print out	Rs 250/-
Travelling expenses to distribute questionnaire	Rs 345/-
Binding	Rs 460/-

Appendix 3:

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Challenges of Knowledge Sharing in Intercultural Organizations' with specific to Multinational Companies in India.

Dear participants,

This questionnaire is a part of my Master's thesis **on The Challenges of Knowledge Sharing in Intercultural Organizations' with specific to Multinational Companies in India** for the award of MA HRM. The questionnaire is designed to take minimum time. The information provided by you will be strictly confidential and protected. Thank you very much for taking part in this research activity, the information provided by you will be used for writing the thesis.

I appreciate your cooperation in this survey.

Thanks & Regards,

Part -1- Demographic Information

Name (Optional)	
Gender	
Age	
Ethnicity	
Level of education	
Organization	
Tenure within Organization	
Mother Tongue	
Languages Known	

Part 2

1. What do you think about the concept of knowledge management? (tick one option only)

- Never heard of
- Is a management fad
- Strategic part of your organization
- Something that your organization is doing but under a different name
- Any other, please specify

2. What is the current status of knowledge management in your organization?

- Introductory phase
- Growth phase
- Nascent phase
- Non existent

3. Is knowledge recognized as an asset in your organization?

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

4. To what extent do you think knowledge acts as an asset?

5. What do you think about the current policies and procedures of knowledge management and knowledge sharing in your organization?

- Important, relevant and latest
 - Important, relevant but not updated
 - Trivial and part of formalities only
6. What is average time that it takes to an employee to get a relevant knowledge document in your firm?
- Few minutes
 - Few hours
 - Few days
 - Few week or more
7. There is a free flow of information in your organization.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
8. In your opinion, does knowledge sharing leads to improved performance?
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
9. Employees in your organization are encouraged to exchange knowledge on a daily basis?
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - Agree

- Strongly Agree

10. The organizational structure allows employees in your organization to accomplish tasks according to knowledge management services

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

11. Do you agree with the belief that much of the success of an MNC results from knowledge-sharing?

Yes

No

12. Please explain your reasoning.

13. What is the biggest barrier that hinders the process of knowledge sharing?

- Functional silos
- Lack of participation
- Unwillingness to share information
- Lack of trust
- Lack of training
- No incentives or rewards for sharing knowledge

14. Is information well documented in your organization?

- Strongly Disagree

- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

15. Which of the following groups are involved in knowledge management practices in your firm?

- Human resource
- Information technology
- Knowledge management unit
- Executive management team
- Documentation centre

• Other, _____ please specify _____

16. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations on how to solve problems and barriers to knowledge-sharing?
