

Knowledge Management Practices Among Students of Higher Education: A Knowledge Transfer Perspective

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Abstract

This study investigates knowledge management (KM) practices in higher education institutions, with a particular emphasis on effective knowledge transfer (EKT) from the learning perspective of students. By applying a descriptive and explanatory research design, five key attributes as distant relations, student receptive capacity, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and communication encoding competence were analyzed. The structured questionnaire employed a five-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 means "strongly disagree" to 5 means "strongly agree" was distributed for final sampled 200 bachelor and master level students using a purposive sampling approach. Findings from multivariate analysis portrayed that student receptive capacity, inherent motivation, and communication encoding competence were significant predictors of effective knowledge transfer (EKT). Remarkably, student inherent motivation and receptive capacity demonstrated the strongest correlation with knowledge transfer. Conversely, distant relations and shared consensus were found to have no significant impact of EKT within this academic background. These findings recommend that institutes of higher learning should prioritize encouraging students' intrinsic motivation and absorptive skill, along with faculty communication skills, to enhance the student's learning capability in the knowledge-based economy.

Keywords: knowledge, knowledge management, effective knowledge transfer, institutions

Introduction

Knowledge is a critical asset for organization (Analoui et al., 2014; Koivisto & Taipalus, 2025), and is increasingly viewed as a sustainable asset that supports long-term competitive advantage for both organizations and nation (Ali & Dominic, 2018). Similarly, knowledge is considered as a crucial asset for gaining competitive advantage, as it plays an important role in ensuring survival of an entity (Halawi, 2005; Tubigi et al., 2013; Vidic, 2022). However, knowledge produce competitive advantage only when it is applied to solve problems, make effective decisions and performance (Gera, 2012) and hence, fruitful applications of knowledge need the transfer of knowledge side by side acquiring and effective utilization of knowledge are also equally important. So far concerned with higher academic institutions, knowledge is just information taken together with context, experience, reflection, interpretation, and creativity. Knowledge can be observed as the capability embodied in the minds of person and immerse in social level, to analyze information, exchanging it into novel knowledge (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). Considering it, the emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), has made knowledge management growingly needed to the functioning and management of education systems. By integrating modern and advanced tools such as artificial intelligence (AI), educational institutions can enhance the creation and dissemination of knowledge. This integration promotes a good culture of effective and continuous learning among academicians, educators, and practitioners. Regarding it, Del Río Fernández et al. (2022) noted that knowledge management is commonly linked with areas such as acquiring of information, management of human resource and intellectual property, innovation, the assessment of intellectual capital, technological tools and support, cultural transformation, and emerging forms of organizational work structures. From this perspective, knowledge management practices assessed included knowledge perception, knowledge creation, knowledge collecting, knowledge sharing, knowledge retention, and knowledge diffusion (Nawaz et al, 2020). In this context, for many years, an increasing number of scholars from different countries of world have demonstrated deep interest in the area of knowledge management, examining various dimensions such as the level of knowledge management adoption, its performance output, hindrances to implementation, and the critical success factors affecting knowledge management adoption (Chawla & Joshi, 2010; Chong et al., 2007; Ju et al., 2008; Singh et al., 2006; Syed-Ikhsan & Rowland, 2004).

Overall, knowledge management practices observed as knowledge creation, knowledge captures, knowledge transfer/sharing, and knowledge application with their inner dimensions. Accordingly, knowledge transfer in the field of knowledge management (KM) related with the flow of knowledge across the borderline created by expert of knowledge domains (Carlile & Rebentisch, 2003). Among the various knowledge management dimensions

discussed above, this study focuses solely on effective knowledge transfer practices, based on learning intent of student, specifically, student receptive capacity and inherent motivation along with distant relations, shared consensus between student and faculty members, and communication encoding competence were considered.

Research Problems

Knowledge management is becoming an increasingly important issue in higher learning, as it enhances the ability to collect and analyze data, change information, and apply innovative ideas (Bhusry & Ranjan, 2011). For this, the various research have been done on knowledge transfer perspective focusing towards the institutional level, but existing literature have uncovered the full phase of effective knowledge transfer or sharing of inter organizational context, specifically knowledge recipients' learning intent within higher educational institutions. Thus, based on it, this study focused the research question as: To what extent do knowledge management practices contribute to effective knowledge transfer (EKT) in higher learning institutions of Nepal?

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to investigate the knowledge management practices (KM) from the perspective of effective knowledge transfer (EKT) in higher learning institutions of Nepal.

Research Hypotheses

H₁: There is a significant relationship between distant relations and effective knowledge transfer.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between student receptive capacity and effective knowledge transfer

H₃: There is significant relationship between shared consensus and effective knowledge transfer..

H₄: There is a significant relationship between student inherent motivation and effective knowledge transfer.

H₅: There is a significant relationship between communication encoding competence and effective knowledge transfer

Limitations

Only a limited range of statistical tools was employed for data analysis, which may have restricted the deeper insights and robustness of the results obtained. Similarly, the study focused only on non-technical academic sectors, excluding disciplines such as science, engineering, and medicine; therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to technical fields where learning processes and knowledge practices may differ.

Review of Literature

Knowledge management is a widespread concept that spans several disciplines within higher education institutions (Del Río Fernández et al., 2022). In the context of higher learning community, knowledge management may be viewed as a strategic framework that enables institutional members to set up practices for acquiring and transferring knowledge, thereby facilitating informed action to improve institutional performance and outputs, while maintaining a balance between information and use of technology (Petrides & Nodine, 2003). Similarly, Katiyar (2015) states that knowledge management can be understood as the systematic process of acquiring, transferring, and applying organizational knowledge in an effective way. An increasing number of firms are attempting to establish knowledge management practices to make better and effective utilization of existing knowledge, and numerous studies have highlighted the importance of knowledge in the firms (Ju et al., 2008). Thus, it is essential to understand and learn how knowledge is generated, systematically retained, effectively transferred, and ultimately applied in practice (Argote et al., 2000). As knowledge center, higher academic institutions can create, develop, and apply knowledge management assets such as communication and networks, digital platform, libraries, and collaboration (Steyn, 2004). Which it turn that knowledge management itself in vital issue in highly developed education systems. Several systems have emerged with the aim of improving knowledge management practices in higher education institutions. It is, however, knowledge management integrates three key institutional resources such as people, processes, and technology to support institutions in managing and transferring or exchanging information more effectively (Petrides & Nodine, 2003). Similarly, it is widely recognized as a major driver of the knowledge-based economy alongside other effective forces such as technology and globalization (Saisana & Muda, 2008). Emphasizing on it, Al-Kurdi (2018) states that knowledge management is not an end in itself; instead, it is designed to foster high quality graduates and enhance innovation and creativity. In this sense, knowledge transfer, as one of the dimensions of knowledge management, plays a crucial responsibility in enhancing the quality of graduates in higher education institutions through knowledge, communication, and motivation-related dimensions as a practice of knowledge management.

In this context, knowledge becomes valuable only when it is appropriate, reliable, and easily accessible to the stakeholders who use it via knowledge sharing or transfer. Knowledge transfer (KT) involves the sharing or distribution of knowledge, as well as the provision of knowledge inputs that support in the solution of problem (Del Río Fernández et al, 2022).. Therefore, effective knowledge transfer depends on a well structured framework, methods, and procedures, supported by a suitable culture of organization (Karlsen & Gottschalk, 2004). Similarly, successful and effective knowledge transfer is achieved when knowledge holders are

able and willing to transfer their expertise (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2000), and the knowledge receivers are equally capable and motivated to acquire and use it (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; Lane et al, 2001) In an academic institutions, knowledge transfer can be measured through different mechanisms based on the activities to be achieved. Some studies have assessed knowledge transfer by re-recreated within the knowledge recipient (Kim & Nelson, 2000). Others have measured it by evaluating the level of difficulty involved in the transfer process (Reagans & McEvily, 2003); scholarly publications and academic presentations (Appleyard, 1996); via communication (Stasser et al. 2000); surveillance (Nonaka, 1991); use of information technology (Galbraith, 1990); internalization approach i.e, knowledge recipient's learning (Compeau & Higgins, 1995; Johnson & Marakas,2000). In this study, empirical review was observed from the perspective of knowledge transfer and its influential attributes.

A study made by Ko et al., (2005) to examines the factors of knowledge transfer, their findings showed that arduous relationship, shared understanding, absorptive capacity, intrinsic motivation of recipient significantly associated with knowledge transfer.

Joshi and Sarkar (2006) performed research to investigate the roles of the knowledge source and knowledge recipient in knowledge transfer process. The results indicated that absorptive capacity was significantly associated with knowledge transfer, whereas motivation to learn had a negative effect on knowledge transfer.

An empirical study was performed by Xu and Ma (2008) to analyze the factors of knowledge transfer, whose major findings exhibited that absorptive capacity had significant effect on enterprise resource planning knowledge transfer, whereas arduous relationship showed not significant to knowledge transfer.

Ju et al., (2008) conducted research to examine the antecedents to knowledge transfer in higher education, whose major findings revealed that absorptive capacity, shared understanding and intrinsic motivation of student significantly positively associated with knowledge transfer, while arduous relationship and knowledge transfer exhibited a significant negative relationship.

An empirical study was carried out by Martin Cruz et al., (2009) to investigate the impact of intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation on knowledge transfer. The research findings demonstrated that intrinsic motivation had significant impact on knowledge transfer, while extrinsic motivation showed insignificant on knowledge transfer.

A study was conducted by Hung et al (2011) to investigate how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation makes impact on knowledge sharing. The findings revealed that intrinsic motivation showed insignificant, while extrinsic motivation has a positive significant impact on knowledge sharing.

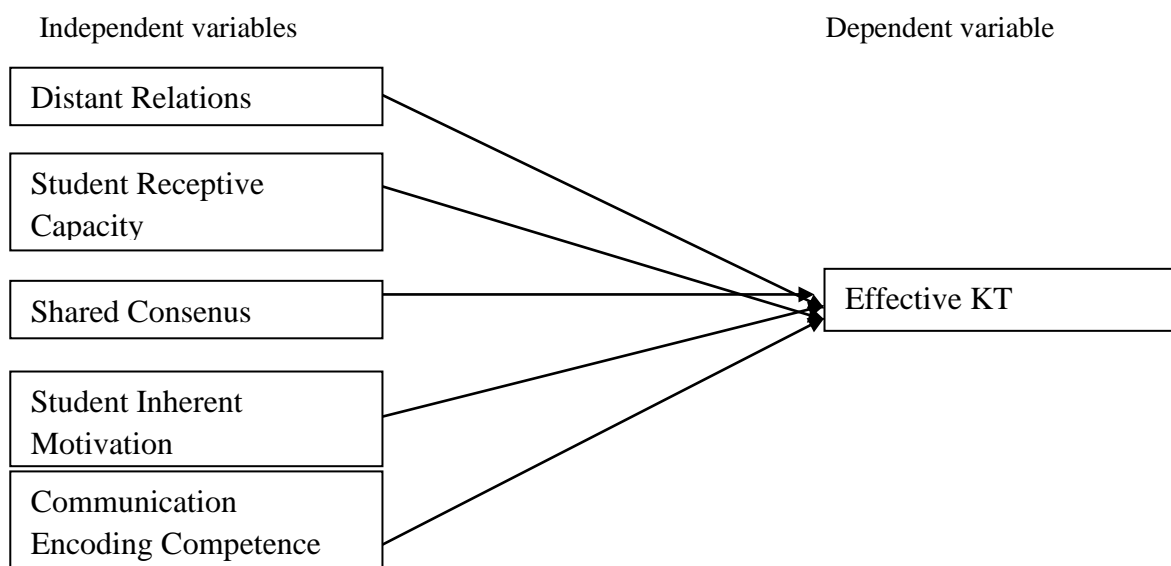
Rai (2022) researched to analyze the numerous determinants that affect knowledge transfer, whose findings portrayed that communication competence and sharing of understanding significantly influence on KT.

Framework of the Study

In the light of the theoretical and empirical review presented above, the study framework is outlined below.

Figure 1

Study Framework



The Operational Definition of Study Variables

Effective Knowledge Transfer: It is the recipient capability to use the new knowledge to create new concepts and ideas that would need the application of both contextual and procedural knowledge skills (Gera, 2012).

Distant Relations: It reflects an emotionally remote relation between a knowledge provider and the knowledge recipient, which influence the providers' ability to transfer the needed knowledge (Szulanski, 1996).

Student Receptive Capacity: It is strengthening students' abilities and skills shapes how effectively they apply, integrate, and even fundamentally build their own core capabilities (Peng et al., 2021).

Shared Consensus: It is a knowledge receiver understanding of shared knowledge between teachers and students (Ju et al., 2008).

Student Inherent Motivation: It is a dynamic mechanism through which knowledge recipient (learners) actively engage in the process of knowledge transfer (Ju et al., 2008).

Communication Encoding Competence: It reflects a knowledge source's skill in presenting ideas clearly, using proper language, and ensuring effective understanding (Monge et al. 1982)

Research Methods and Materials

The study aimed to examine the impact of knowledge, motivation, and communication related attributes on effective knowledge transfer (EKT) in higher academic institutions through the perspective of students learning approach. A descriptive and explanatory research design was employed to effectively examine the sources of effective knowledge transfer. As descriptive research design describes the characteristics or behaviors of a phenomenon and explanatory research design explain the relationships between study variables and to test cause-and-effect hypotheses. The target population of the study comprised students from constituent and affiliated colleges of only single university in Nepal. The selection of this university was based on its year of early establishment. A purposive sampling technique was used to distribute the questionnaire, as this approach is suitable for employing numerous data collection methods and enables the researcher to obtain rich, relevant, and reliable information from selected respondents. It involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups who possess exceptional expertise related to a phenomenon of interest (Nawaz et al., 2020).

Regarding survey adequacy, Rugg and Petre (2007) emphasized that the sample size should be determined as 'as many as necessary' rather than 'as many as possible'. Ahmad and Halim (2017) recommended that the size of sample 200 or more respondents is adequate to yield reliable and interpretable values. Accordingly, the study employed a sample of 200 respondents.

A total of 32 indicators were implemented to assess the variables via five-point Likert type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), following a previously developed and applied questionnaires as it assures the validity and reliability of the instruments. A total of 365 printed form of well-structured questionnaire were distributed to diploma and post-graduate level students, either during class room sessions or as per their situational request, handed over to them to fill up at home. Of these, 235 completed questionnaires were returned. The response rate was 64.38. After screening, 35 questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete or incorrectly filled responses, resulting in a valid sample for analysis.

Data were analyzed using SPSS software, employing descriptive statistics, reliability test, Pearson's correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis. As descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, relationships among variables were examined using correlation coefficient, and the predictive effects of distant relations, student receptive capacity,

shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and communication encoding competence were tested using multiple regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Table 1 outlines the demographic details of the respondent i.e, students, including their gender, level of study, and faculty they belonged. The data of demographic characteristics were gathered through a structured questionnaire and then systematically recorded and analyzed in terms of frequency and percentage.

Table 1

Respondents' Characteristics

Measure	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Boy	73	36.5
	Girl	127	63.5
Level	Bachelor	152	76.0
	Master	48	24.0
Faculty	Management	79	39.5
	Education	77	38.5
	Humanities and Social Science	34	17.0
	Law	10	5.0
	Total(N)	200	100

Note. Survey responses and authors' computation

Table 1 depicted the respondents' socio- demographic information. Considering the gender of 200 respondents, 73 were boys and 127 were girls, which indicates that the majority i.e, 63.5% were girls while 36.5% were boys. Level wise distribution of respondents shows that largest proportion (152)76% belonged to bachelor, followed by the master level 24%. Similarly, faculty wise allocation of respondents represents that 39.5% belonged to management faculty, followed by education faculty 38.5%, humanities and social science 17%, and law faculty represent only 5.0% respectively.

Table 2

Scale Reliability Testing

Constructs	Included Items	Cronbach's value
Effective Knowledge Transfer	6	.755
Distant Relations	6	.755
Student Receptive Capacity	5	.716

Constructs	Included Items	Cronbach's value
Shared Consensus	5	.775
Student Inherent Motivation	5	.733
Communication Encoding Competence	5	.723

Note. Survey responses and authors' computation

An alpha coefficient greater than 0.70 is commonly accepted (Cronbach's, 1951) as evidence of good internal consistency, confirming that the items consistently represent the underlying construct. The Cronbach's alpha values for each construct (Table 2) are above the threshold 0.70, reflecting acceptable internal consistency among the scale items.

Table 3

Results of the Correlation Test

Constructs	Effective Knowledge Transfer	Distant Relations	Student Receptive Capacity	Shared Consensus	Student Inherent Motivation	Communication Encoding Competence
EKT	1					
DR	.329**	1				
SRC	.392**	.459**	1			
S C	.196**	.219**	.346**	1		
SI M	.399**	.378**	.488**	.219**	1	
CEC	.373**	.338**	.474**	.415**	.486**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note. Survey responses and authors' computation

Table 3 results indicates that all independent variables as distant relations, student receptive capacity, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and communication decoding competence are positively correlated with the dependent variable effective knowledge transfer (EKT). Specifically, distant relations showed a moderate positive correlation with effective knowledge transfer ($r = 0.329$), whereas communication encoding competence demonstrated a moderately strong positive correlation ($r = 0.373$). Similarly, shared consensus showed a weak positive correlation with dependent variable ($r = 0.196$). In contrary, student inherent motivation and receptive capacity had ($r = 0.399$) and ($r = 0.392$) respectively, which exhibited relatively stronger positive correlations with the dependent variable.

All correlation coefficients were found to be statistically significant at the 0.01 level, representing that the perceived relationships are unexpected to have occurred by chance. These findings suggest that increases in distant relations, student receptive capacity, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and communication decoding competence are associated with

corresponding increases in effective knowledge transfer (EKT), with student receptive capacity and inherent motivation showing the strongest associations. Overall, the correlations finding provide fair support for the inclusion of all independent variables in the subsequent regression analysis.

Table 4

Model Output

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.493	.243	.223	2.093
F-test	12.448			
p-value (F-test)	0.000			
Sig. at 5% level				

Predictors: (Constant), Communication Encoding Competence, Distant Relations, Shared Consensus, Student Inherent Motivation, Student Receptive Capacity

Table 4 exhibits a coefficient value of R (0.493), implying a moderate positive relationship between the EKT and set of predictors. The value of R² is 0.243, which indicates that approximately 24.3% of the variation in EKT is explained by the predictors in the model. After adjusting the predictors, the value of adjusted R² (0.223), indicating that about 22.3% of the variance in EKT can be attributed to communication encoding competence, distant relations, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and student receptive capacity. The standard error (2.093), which implies that the predicted values of EKT vary from the actual observed values by an average of about 2.09 units. Overall, the results portrays that the model has a moderate explanatory power, even though the variables- communication encoding competence, distant relations, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and student receptive capacity contribute meaningfully to explaining EKT. In addition, the F-value of 12.448 with a p-value of 0.000 demonstrates that the predictors provide a good fit to the data and the model is effective in predicting EKT.

Table 5

Analysis of Multiple Predictors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	10.981	1.821		6.031	0.000		

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Distant Relations	0.113	0.064	0.127	1.762	0.080	0.751	1.332
Student Receptive Capacity	0.163	0.080	0.164	2.047	0.042	0.608	1.645
Shared Consensus	0.004	0.075	0.004	0.055	0.956	0.796	1.256
Student Inherent Motivation	0.207	0.082	0.195	2.532	0.012	0.660	1.516
Communication Encoding Competence	0.143	0.072	0.156	1.972	0.050	0.624	1.604

a Dependent Variable: Effective Knowledge Transfer

Note. Survey responses and authors' computation

The results (Table-5) highlighted the influence of distant relations, student receptive capacity, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and communication decoding competence on the effective knowledge transfer. The results demonstrated that the intercept value was 10.981, with standard error of 1.821. The corresponding t-value (6.031) and p-value (0.000) imply that the constant is statistically significant, indicating that when all the combined set of predictors are held constant, the expected value of EKT is 10.981. Among the independent variables, student receptive capacity ($\beta = 0.164$, t-value = 2.047, and p-value = 0.042) and student inherent motivation ($\beta = 0.195$, t-value = 2.532, and p-value = 0.012) exerted a statistically significant positive effect on EKT. Communication encoding competence ($\beta = 0.156$, t-value = 1.972, and p-value = 0.050) exhibited marginal significance, suggesting a weak positive relationship with the effective knowledge transfer. In contrast, distant relations ($\beta = 0.127$, t-value = 1.762, and p-value = 0.080) did not show a statistically significant influence at the 5% significance level, and shared consensus ($\beta = 0.004$, t-value = 0.055, and p-value = 0.956) was found to be not significant. Overall, the findings indicate that the variables student receptive capacity and inherent motivation were the most influential predictors of EKT, communication encoding competence is marginally significant, while distant relations and shared consensus do not significantly influence EKT within higher academic institutions.

Additionally, considering VIF, the values for communication encoding competence, distant relations, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, student receptive capacity are below the threshold of 5, implying that multicollinearity is not a concern in the model.

Table 6*Hypotheses Test Verification*

Hypothesis	p-value	Decision
H ₁ : There is a significant relationship between distant relations and effective knowledge transfer.	0.080	Not supported
H ₂ : There is a significant relationship between student receptive capacity and effective knowledge transfer.	0.042	Supported
H ₃ : There is significant relationship between shared consensus and effective knowledge transfer.	0.956	Not supported
H ₄ : There is a significant relationship between student inherent motivation and effective knowledge transfer.	0.012	Supported
H ₅ : There is a significant relationship between communication encoding competence and effective knowledge transfer	0.050	Supported

In this study, there were five determinants that influence knowledge transfer. Accordingly, hypothesis was tested and found that H₂, H₄, and H₅ significantly associated with knowledge transfer and others two i.e., H₁ and H₃ showed insignificant to dependent variable. Regarding the variable distant relations with knowledge transfer found contradict the research carried out by Ju et al. (2008), whose findings revealed that significant negative relationship with effective KT. Concerning with shared perception of students found to be significant to effective knowledge transfer, which also supported by the findings of Ko et al. (2005) and Rai (2022), whose findings exhibited that shared consensus significantly contributed to knowledge transfer. With regard the variable student receptive capacity in relation with effective knowledge transfer, found insignificant, contrary research conducted by Joshi and Sarkar (2006), Ju et al. (2008), and Ko et al. (2005) showed significant impact on effective knowledge transfer. So far concerned with student inherent motivation and effective knowledge transfer, the findings demonstrated that student inherent motivation significantly positively associated with effective knowledge transfer and this finding was also supported the study performed by Ju et al. (2008), Ko et al. (2005), and Martin Cruz et al. (2009). But this result contradicts the findings of Hung et al. (2011), their findings portrayed that intrinsic motivation insignificant to knowledge sharing. Similarly, there was significantly positively association between communication encoding competence and effective knowledge transfer (EKT) and this finding was also confirmed by Rai (2022), whose findings portrayed that communication competence significantly associated with knowledge transfer.

Conclusion

The study mainly focused on knowledge management practices in higher learning students in making relation with knowledge transfer and its influential determinants. The variables used in this study were distant relations, student receptive capacity, shared consensus, student inherent motivation, and communication encoding competence as independent variables from which practices of knowledge management emerged and their impact was examined on knowledge transfer through learning perspective of students. The findings clearly portrays that how these attributes jointly contribute to enhancing the learning capability of students those who are involved in higher education in Nepal. The result of correlation demonstrates that student inherent motivation had highest value of correlation, thereafter student receptive capacity, communication encoding competence, distant relations, and shared consensus respectively (Table 2). Additionally, result of multivariate analysis exhibited that student receptive capacity, student inherent motivation, and communication encoding competence significantly associated with effective knowledge transfer (EKT), while distant relations and shared consensus showed not significant with effective knowledge transfer (EKT). Overall, concluded that knowledge management practices among student emphasized the determinants absorptive capacity and inherent motivation of student along with communication competence, meanwhile the excess distant relationship and shared understanding between or among the teacher and students could not make any differences in learning capability of student.

The study links knowledge management practices with effective learning in higher academic community. By highlighting the full phase of knowledge transfer in inter-organizational setting, it recommends that future research could broaden its scope to investigate knowledge sharing among different universities or between the knowledge industry and academia.

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