THE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER MECHANISMS

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Abstract

Agreement within current literature accepts that appropriate techniques and strategies are needed to officiate the multi-faceted nature of knowledge and knowledge transfer processes in a business context. Further, complex mechanisms are essential to maintain and support the subsequent paradigms needed to orchestrate its usefulness to an organisation. In this paper we reflect on the multi-faceted resources, often found within a business framework, and consider if they must be within existing social context and are additional 'structural' features, which tend to augment complexity of any existing processes or procedures. We suggest that complex knowledge and knowledge transfer scenarios such as this reflect the number of interdependent technologies, routines, individuals, and resources, but must be linked to a particular knowledge or knowledge transfer mechanism to be effective. Although, in a business context, infrastructure may be desirable, the assumption from many arguments is that, given the correct framework of governance in whatever form it is described, knowledge derived from a governance framework will become valuable. As a focus for discussion, we suggest that a counter argument from this position may be that whilst the resultant transfer of knowledge may be useful to the business in terms of resource efficiency, any knowledge value will derive from the success of the transfer practices

Key words: *Knowledge, knowledge transfer, efficiency, success, mechanisms, process.*

Introduction

Within this comparative conceptual paper on knowledge management theory, emphasising the importance of infrastructure and governed frameworks regarding knowledge transfer mechanisms is an understandable position to elaborate from. Nonetheless, this slightly myopic position

remains limited, thus, exposure to the complexities of knowledge transfer mechanisms require to be more fully understood if business success derived from the value of the knowledge remains indicative

As such, the necessity for a formal frameworks and supporting discursive to process orientated practices for successful transfer has emerged as a systemic meaning around the unity of knowledge as its episteme. Whereby, authors such as (Lucas, 2010; Robu, Lazar, & Brady-Fryer, 2015; Rottman, 2008; Venkitachalam & Bosua, 2014) explain that, from a knowledge perspective, a trusting and open organisational culture is necessary for success. Similarly, (Afzal & Afzal, 2014; Zack, 1999; Suzanne Zyngier & Burstein, 2012) agree the need to develop a knowledge strategy with this position, but add that correct information systems and supporting infrastructure are also necessary. From this perspective, tt is clear to see why many specialists believe that knowledge management is underpinned by many concepts and debates and it is also clear that, each interpretation helps convey knowledge in a universal fashion.

Other authors such as (Hussler & Ronde, 2015; Maruta, 2012; Sie & Yakhlef, 2009) however, argue that knowledge cannot be managed in a true sense and that knowledge management is a poor terminology as a concept, since knowledge requires a mind-set of activity not objectivity (Sveiby, 2001). Within contemporary literature, many discussions indicate a general agreement that a framework of sorts, buoyed by a criteria of governance and management, can support successful knowledge transfer (Boyle, McDonnell, Mitchell, & Nicholas, 2012; Dysvik, Buch, & Kuvaas, 2015; Lin, Lin, Yen, & Shih, 2013; Love & Roper, 2015).

Nonetheless, although knowledge structure is recognised as exhibiting primary importance with an organisation there must a consideration of other indicators to give it meaning. Such that, the cognitive position of knowledge transfer practitioners involved with any infrastructure remains fundamental to the success of the knowledge transfer process. Thus, we can add to this argument by stating that for knowledge transfer to be effective within a business or organisation, people are an important ingredient to knowledge effectiveness (Gray & Meister, 2004; Simonen, Blom, & Viitanen, 2011; Wai Fong, Nguyen, & Xu, 2013) and knowledge understanding (Argote, McEvily, & Reagans, 2003; Nonaka & Teece, 2001; Secundo, Dumay, Schiuma, & Passiante, 2016) related to human cohesion (Conchado, Carot, & Bas, 2015; Daspit, Tillman, Boyd, & McKee, 2013; Støvring, 2012) is demanded.

Mechanisms

Mechanisms needed to move useful knowledge around in a meaningful and purposeful way is a clear extension of an encompassing framework of process or practice, combined with decision-making processes. In each case, it is important to examine satisfycing integration of these positions, thus, become a decision-making strategy or cognitive heuristic, which has considered all available alternatives until an acceptability threshold is agreed. Whereby, an agreed consensus meets with a particular conception of preferences, residing with competing arguments, which exhibit the known preference the organisation.

Thus, a working framework, which forms the basic mechanisms of the knowledge transfer governance. In this context, (Burstein, Sohal, Zyngier, & Sohal, 2010; S. Zyngier & Burstein, 2011; S. Zyngier, Burstein, & McKay, 2006) broadly summarise these supporting mechanisms by explaining that the transfer of knowledge usually involves either codification or personalisation or a fusion of the two extremes. Wherein, the mechanism in this case would involve the dissemination of written documents as a means to transfer knowledge. Codification can therefore be seen as the most efficient outcome mechanisms as, in this case, it would employ the recording of knowledge using words and texts, and transferring the knowledge through the use of written or electronic documents.

The main advantages of codification in this example include easy access, wide dissemination, low costs, and good preservation of knowledge. Also, in this case, a personalisation mechanism needed to orchestrate any preferences are vestiges of hedonism and methodological individualism, whereby, collaborative frameworks used by governing individuals. This is not a new concept , but worthy of a mention given the complexity of the integrative trajectory at this stage of the transfer and is examined by (Mohamed & Arisha, 2013; Yeo, Kim, Coh, & Kang, 2013), who explain that it involves person-to-person interaction and is often in the form of personal advice or personal training.

Personalisation

The main advantages of this personalisation mechanism can be seen as its ability to articulate non-codifiable knowledge and enhance in-depth understanding of previously codified knowledge. Thus, if we now wish to transition this broad categorisation into useful management direction there

are key knowledge transfer mechanisms and dimensions to consider within this combinative structure:

Personalisation Mechanism.
• *Sequential Transfer ~ frequent, non-routine*
• *Immediate Transfer ~ frequent and routine tasks*
• *Remote Transfer ~ tacit knowledge transferred socially*
• *Considered Transfer ~ shared among stakeholders to complete a task.*
• *Proficient Transfer ~ transferred from an expert source to resolve problems.*

However, if we consider that the framework of the knowledge transfer exchange will affect the integration of knowledge transfer mechanism, then expectation is that it will be worthwhile to do so for both parties. Thus, both parties will be motivated to pursue complex but efficient mechanisms to do this. Naturally, efficient mechanisms, which will assist the knowledge transfer process, reflect a need for this overall situation to be valid from each participants understanding of the situation. Further, it is a necessity to have concrete targets in which both sender and receiver of knowledge can assess the usefulness and applicability of transferred knowledge. This view underlines the significance of personal capabilities and thus personal interpretation of knowledge value (Hurmelinna-Laukkanen & Heiman, 2012; Lemire, Demers-Payette, & Jefferson-Falardeau, 2013; Martelo-Landroguez & Juan-Gabriel, 2014; Shu-Mei & Pei-Shan, 2014).

Wherein, personal interpretation is an important factor as it has the potential to either enhance or to inhibit the practitioners to act appropriately to support the transfer scenario. Further, the identification of this cognitive importance will presumably assist in making precise decisions concerning the transfer mechanism and the theoretical underpinnings thereof. There is little doubt that this type of mechanistic assessment, which could reduce inherent knowledge transfer errors, has clear benefits in an organisational or business context.

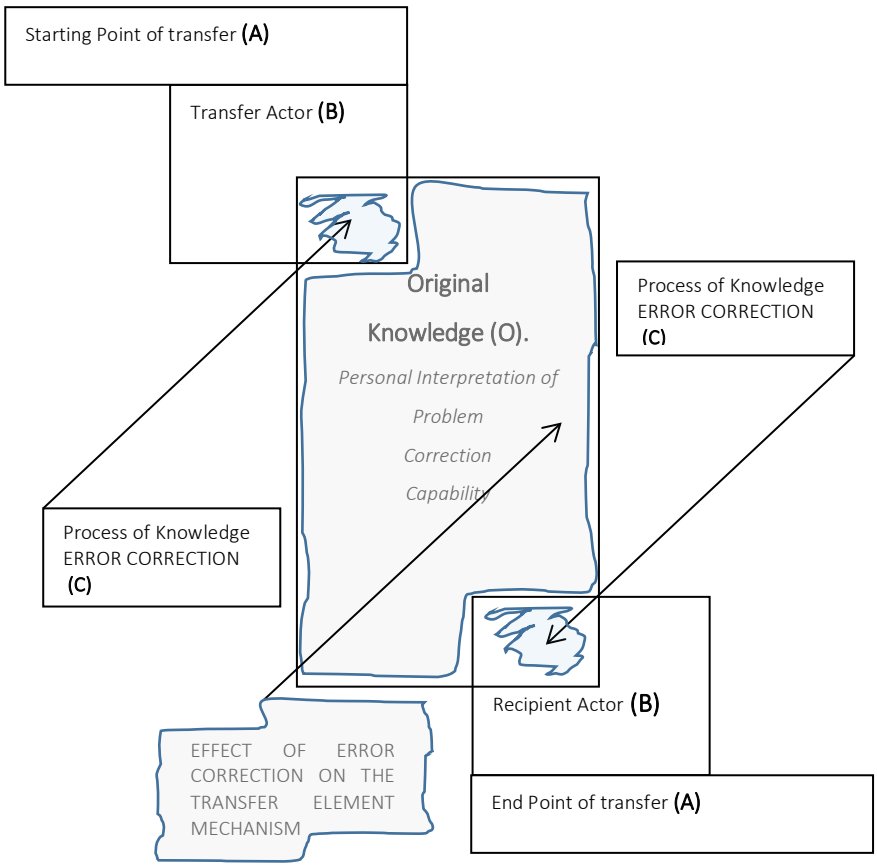
Discussion

Many authors (Bessant & Francis, 1999; Fascia, 2015; Zhang & Jiang, 2015) offer a contemporary view regarding which knowledge transfer mechanism is applicable to solve a problem in relation to a knowledge sharing process. This is indicated by the consistent reference to knowledge culture (Bouzayane, Saad, Gargouri, & Kassel, 2014; Jain, 2014; Rahman, Osman-Gani, Momen, & Islam, 2015; Sheng, Shen-Yao, Thompson, &

Yuh-Feng, 2013; Wen-Hsiang, 2013) as one way in which a group of corresponding stakeholders solve problems and reconcile dilemmas. We can expand on this view by adding that whilst this may be apparent from a static knowledge point of view, there are significant cognitive conditional attachments that must be satisfied for efficient and effective knowledge transfer to take place.

Whereby, knowledge has to be managed or governed correctly, nonetheless, we can also suggest that introducing a dimensioning factor to the mechanism, needed to absorb a perceived problem, must encompass the problem in a new governance framework. This means that any mechanism must incorporate two frameworks to work (A) and (B) which, encompass the same set of problem/answer or error correction space (C) and are now regardless of any epistemic value of the original knowledge (O). Thus, transfer is still problematic although measured as efficient using contemporary methods. The following diagram - ***Error Correction Mechanism*** - summarises this position.

Figure 1.0: Error correction mechanism



Therefore, in this example, error correction in terms of mechanisms, and knowledge compilation in terms of cognitive interaction, is additionally required as a filtering mechanism to encompass frameworks, boundaries, and parameters, which are able to support the overall transfer scenario. Understandably, this now complicates the original simple definitions and frameworks outlined in the preceding discussion.

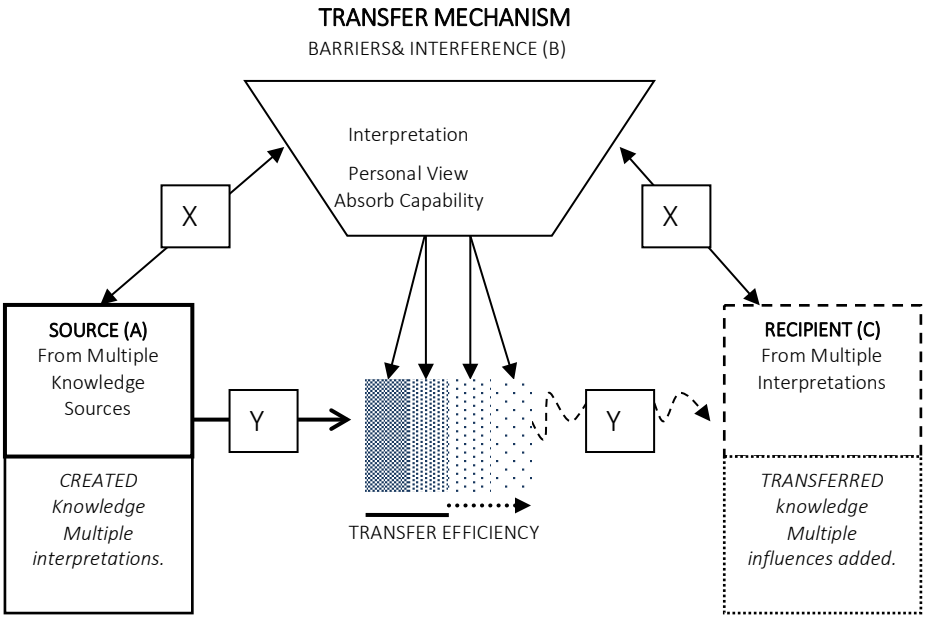
Whereby, we can now see that to coalesce relational views, error correction in the transfer scenario must exist, thus, knowledge transfer practitioners must have declarative knowledge of the constraints supporting a particular problem domain.

This is an important and fundamental argument, such that knowledge, which consists of declarative representations and description, may also include problematic elements, which are fundamental to the transfer success interpretation. Thus, our interpretation would indicate that the distinction of declarative knowledge can help focus on the cause of an error epistemically and therefore suggests the transfer mechanism is the method by which errors are resolved.

From this new perspective, we can now view something which can be brought to the point of creation and which then forms into a constructed source knowledge **(A)**. Therefore, what is then transferred **(Y)** is a combination of the constructed source **(A)** additionally influenced through further interpretation **(X)** via an amalgamation of barriers and obstructions (B) and this is reconstructed at the recipient point **(C)**.

From an efficiency point of view, in a business perspective, this re-construction is overarched by a combined causal effect of managed intent, prior learning, cognitive capability, and theoretical implication. Thus, encompasses understanding and capability to resolve problems within an environment focused towards achievement of success and efficiency , but importantly, underpinned by the efficiency of the transfer mechanism.

Fig 2: Actual knowledge transfer Scenario



Thus, we can now see that in order for knowledge transfer mechanics to work efficiently, it is the satisfaction of cognitive conditional attachments, which must be satisfied, not the underpinning descriptions of the knowledge, and as such, complexity of errors within a transfer scenario remain constant.

Conclusion

This discussion focused on developing a conceptual understanding of the mechanisms supporting and surrounding knowledge and knowledge transfer, in relation to knowledge transfer practices in a business context. Because of the broad and varied facets of studies connected with this line of research, some original interpretations were needed to critique the diverse theory and opines, and the length of this conclusion reflects this. Much of the critique, encircled discrepancies between the contending and sometimes analogous points of view, often related to barriers and obstructions surrounding knowledge transfer practices, and this allowed the thesis to form specific literature themes in this respect.

This resulted in identification of a typical knowledge transfer scenario which must have associated component parts, (source, mechanism and

recipient), all of which are influenced from multiple interpretations and views, and it is clear that before knowledge is transferred, evaluation of a responsive mechanism is a complex endeavour. This is because, understanding the necessary functionality derives from assorted definitions, categorisations and opines. Thus, as a value entity can only exist as a causal effect, which forms through an amalgamated communication of the sum of process and procedural parts.

Wherein, each assemblance may potentially resulting in a different entity. In summary, knowledge transfer in a business context remains complex, difficult to achieve and involves multiple sources and definitions of knowledge. However, a resolve could include the use of mechanisms which when re-constructed via the transfer process, result in the recipient using multifarious methods of interpretation.

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