

## Knowledge Sharing Behaviour is Critical for Business Continuity in A Pandemic

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### Abstract

The widespread COVID-19 epidemic has had a profound impact on businesses all around the world by hastening their digitalization. The operations of the airport are also being transformed to ensure business continuity. The Malaysian government's mobility control order (MCO) requires workers to work from home on alternate days. This working structure necessitated requirements for active knowledge exchange behavior. This study examines Airport Terminal Services (ATS) employees' knowledge sharing attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived control behaviors using quantitative method. The findings show that the associations between attitude and perceived control behavior in knowledge sharing are moderate. The respondents demonstrate weak relationships between subjective norms and knowledge sharing. As a result, it is suggested that ATS should invest in improving the subjective norm by developing a knowledge sharing culture within the firm. A comprehensive knowledge management system that includes data and information access, storage, and retrieval would allow the corporation to continue operations regardless of the situation. Knowledge sharing is accelerated via constant communication, staff engagement, and training. Airport operations are vulnerable to a variety of unforeseen events, including pandemics, natural disasters, and accidents. As a result, ensuring a resilient design of work processes and workers' desire to embark on the change endeavor is critical to corporate sustainability.

**Keywords:** *Airport Services, Knowledge Management, Knowledge Sharing, Pandemic, Business Continuity*

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### **Background to the Study**

The Coronavirus outbreak that began in 2019 threatened the health of the people around the world. It disrupted many business operations causing a lot of concern on business continuity. One of the key elements of business continuity is to have a resilient business plan. To achieve this, an organization needs to design critical functions and build necessary infrastructure to support the functions. The transition to work from home due to MCO has accelerated the digitalization of business operations. The use of instant messaging, emails and online meetings has increased tremendously. The vast amount of information transmitted, and the data required to be made available to employees at various locations requires concerted efforts from various sources as information is needed as fast as possible especially in an airport environment. When speed is critical (such as in response to a crisis), businesses should design appropriate Knowledge Management (KM) processes to aid or assist management actions (Iacuzzi, Fedele, & Garlatti, 2020). This is because by minimizing possible crisis damage, KM may assist managers in making more effective use of substantial resources and assisting companies in flourishing and surviving.

### **Enhancing IT Infrastructure to Support Knowledge Sharing**

Moreover, enhancement on Information Technology (IT) infrastructure to support the KM processes may assist in achieving and facilitating the accomplishment of organizational goals (Wang & Wu, 2020). Building additional technologies would enhance the effectiveness of the decision made by the management due to accessibility of information (Nguyen, Malik, & Sharma, 2021). While it is critical to acquire critical knowledge quickly, it is also critical to have access to critical information to make informed strategic judgements. The challenges employees face by working from home mostly centered on the lack of resources such as poor infrastructure such as poor internet access, software availability and access to official documents (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021)). The situation might affect an employee's performance in completing their tasks. In addition, the previous work process that includes hardcopy papers (bills, statements of accounts, notices, and invoices) with proven workflow is rendered unusable. Total revamp on dissemination of information and documentation, with new workflows need to be established, thus requiring review of knowledge exchange processes too (Iqbal, Latif, Marimon, Sahibzada, & Hussain, 2019). Considering these challenges, the study proposed that knowledge sharing culture is the key to the successful transformation into digitalisation of the workplace.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the factors that influence an employee's willingness to share knowledge and to predict which independent variables, namely attitude, social norms, and perceived behavioral control, best predict an employee's willingness to share knowledge variance. As shown in Table 7.0, two independent factors, Attitudes, and Perceived Behavioral Control, have a significant impact on the dependent variable. The non-significant independent variable is subjective norms. The p-values for two significant independent variables, attitudes, and Perceived Behavioral Control, are less than 0.05, while subjective norms are more than 0.05. The researchers' hypothesis that attitudes and perceived behavioral control influence an employee's propensity to share knowledge was confirmed. When it comes to forecasting the variance of their behavior influencing information sharing,

employees' attitude has the highest Beta Coefficient value. The findings indicate that ATS employees anticipated and grasped their knowledge sharing behavior. According to Zhang & Ng (2012), attitudes are "beliefs" in the results of a certain activity. It explains that individual attitudes towards a specific behavior are important in instances where behaviors are being evaluated (Zhang & Ng, 2012). Razak et al. (2020) demonstrated this when they discovered that agreement or disagreement was related to people's attitudes.

According to the findings, employees believe it is their responsibility to share and engage in knowledge sharing activity relevant to the company's well-being even if they are not compensated. The majority of respondents agreed that sharing information is a beneficial and joyful activity. The research also found that ATS employees, regardless of their experience or position, are eager to share their knowledge. This is corroborated by Syed et al. (2021) study, which found that employees' attitudes influence their desire to share information with others. Furthermore, based on statistical findings, individuals with years of experience have an excellent sense of capacity, which represents their ability to communicate information, use technology, and learn new skills related to their profession. Employees will be more willing to offer their expertise if they have faith in their coworkers' abilities and experience. Lin and Huang (2020) discovered that the value of team members' contributions is positively connected with team trust and that both have a significant impact on knowledge sharing and team effectiveness.

Matiza, (2020) predicts that cognitive dissonance of perceived behavioral control may affect workplace decision-making and knowledge-sharing. Self-aware people share their knowledge more. Rezaei et al. (2021) found that workplace workers learned from others because they assumed future information will satisfy knowledge requirements. Thus, perceived behavior affects team knowledge-sharing by improving employees' emotions, abilities, confidence, and viewpoints. Management's positive behavior may encourage employees to engage with others and exchange knowledge. Rezaei et al. (2021) found that workplace workers learned from others because they assumed future information will satisfy knowledge requirements. Employees often spend many hours learning valuable skills, so this assumption is reasonable. Employees will moderate their behavior when dealing with others, which may encourage them to interact more.

The Covid 19 pandemic has also had an impact on airport service operations. However, the findings of this study suggest that there may be another way to perform the activities. To begin, information sharing behaviors should be based on the new method of working in order to maximize productivity. The company should also have an easy-to-use and accessible knowledge-sharing platform that all employees can access at any time and from any location. A robust procedure and infrastructure would motivate employees to participate in change projects. As a result, it will have a good impact on their opinion of their ability to communicate knowledge, which will change their behaviors in sharing their expertise and knowledge. Access to information and materials would indirectly improve their abilities and expertise. Managers could use online meetings to encourage staff to share their thoughts on innovation and improvement with a group of coworkers instead of meeting in person every week to catch

up on work. Employees that have a sense of belonging to their company are more likely to contribute their knowledge in order to help the company become more productive and efficient in the long run.

In addition, changing the way of working necessitates strong managerial support and dedication. One strategy to instill the norm is to implement an effective KM-focused training programme for all workers. A well-trained KM employee would benefit their coworkers. They have the ability to do a better job. By demonstrating their expertise, they have a good chance of convincing others to follow in their footsteps. Furthermore, constant engagement through departmental events and informal gatherings where employees may share their ideas and knowledge is critical to developing the sharing culture. Organizations should invest in continual learning to sustain changes in knowledge sharing behavior. Lin and Huang (2020) discovered evidence that connects successful learning to effective information sharing and, eventually, team effectiveness. Employees should be permitted to organize their own training development to guarantee that learning is optimum. Employees would be more responsible for their learning if they could choose which areas they needed to focus on or which topics they wanted to learn. Instead of relying on HR professionals, employees would be free to make their own judgements. The ability of the organization to maximize and develop each employee's skills can lead to major development opportunities. Furthermore, cross-departmental knowledge exchange efforts enable staff to accomplish their tasks more successfully and efficiently.

Finally, the purpose of this research is to identify the major elements influencing knowledge sharing behavior among airport service staff during the Covid 19 pandemic outbreak. However, there are certain limitations to this study. First, due to time constraints, the researchers were unable to investigate all possible aspects influencing information exchange between employees and management during Covid-19. Second, due to a Movement Control Order (MCO), it is difficult to obtain data from all respondents. During this time, operations were not as busy as they had been previously. The vast majority of them continue to work from home, with only a few flights and freight operations. Third, to acquire data for this research study, a quantitative strategy was used. Qualitative data (for example, observations made by leaders, discussion logs kept by employees, or job assignments) could also be used for future study analysis. Finally, this study looked at the impact of attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control on knowledge sharing behavior. Future research may look into other variables like leadership support and/or empowerment as modifying or mediating variables in the link between the stated independent and dependent variables.

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