



RESEARCH ARTICLE

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## THE RELEVANCE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN ORGANIZATIONS

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to conduct a systematic mapping of literature with the terms organizational climate and knowledge sharing. From the methodological point of view, a systematic literature review was conducted on SciELO, Scopus and Web of Sciencedatabase. As a result of the research, after the screening process, we obtained 11 articles that address the impacts of organizational climate for knowledge sharing. All these articles were of quantitative research (survey) with online questionnaire. The distribution of quantitative research in terms of countries have predominance in Asia. The main conclusion of this research, it was found that the organizational climate is an element that strongly influences the action of sharing knowledge among members of a team. Thus, this research is intended as a contribution, be a starting point for researchers and interested in the subject, so they know where to start and develop their research to meet international research relating the organizational climate and knowledge sharing.

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### INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is a strategic resource in a competitive and dynamic economy. The creation, dissemination and sharing of knowledge employees in an organization are key to achieving and maintaining lasting competitive advantages (Nonaka & Konno, 1998). Knowledge is information combined with experience, values, context, interpretation and reflection (Davenport & Prusak, 1998), or a set of data and information used by the persons or organizations to support the practice, in order to accomplish tasks and create new information (Schreiber, Akkermans, & Anjewierden, 2002). Data can be described as a collection of facts, measurements or statistics; while the information is comprised of timely, processed and organized data, knowledge, in turn, is the relevant information added context and provides the action (Keelan, 2003). These three elements (data, information and knowledge) are regarded as the property of an organization, but the knowledge is the most valuable asset, because it has greater significance than data and information. In short, the relevant knowledge to an organization is not only what people know, but what they do in their organizational routine, that is, as they know is put into practical actions in the exercise of their duties for the benefit of the organization.

For Probst, Raub and Romhardt (2002), knowledge is seen as a strategic resource and covers the skills and capabilities that individuals use to solve problems. Therefore, organizational knowledge is an inseparable part of the process and its share assumes a prominent role in the management of an organization. On the sharing of knowledge, Lin (2007, p.135) reports that "knowledge sharing can be considered an important process in organizations, because it is fundamental for the generation of new ideas and develop new opportunities through socialization." Thus, sharing work-related knowledge the and exchange of experiences with other members of the organization is directly related to innovation in the company, and therefore, recognized by many scholars as a complex and the most important phenomenon for the creation process of knowledge. To Kharabsheh (2007) and Gupta and Govindarajan (2000), the sharing of knowledge is the cornerstone of the KM processes. However, individual knowledge is not shared by the people spontaneously and there are several influences for this to happen (Wang & Noe, 2010). Different factors impact the sharing of knowledge, as the reward system maintained by the organization (Bartol & Srivastava, 2002), and the organizational climate (Chen, Chuang & Chen, 2012; Han, 2018; Reyes & Zapata, 2014). In this respect Hoegl, Parboteeah and Munson (2003) argue that

the appropriate organizational climate provides greater interaction between members of a work team, allowing, when faced with dilemmas, they can interact with each other, participating actively in the range of appropriate solutions. Thus, for these authors, the organizational climate is central to occur knowledge sharing. In this context, the following research question arises: What are the impacts of organizational climate for knowledge sharing? With this, this article has as main objective to analyze the impacts of organizational climate for knowledge sharing. To achieve this goal a systematic review was carried out in the Scielo databases, Scopus and Web of Science, whose theme involves: knowledge management; organizational climate and knowledge sharing.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The nature, this research is characterized as a basic search. As to the objectives, it is exploratory. As for the procedures, we carried out a systematic literature review, according to the following protocol:

**Background:** The relevance of the organizational environment for knowledge sharing.

**Objective:** To analyze the impacts of organizational climate for knowledge sharing.

**Research question:** what are the impacts of organizational climate for knowledge sharing?

**Measurement:** Number of papers identified.

**Population:** Full papers published in international journals. Publication period: January 2009 to January 2019.

**Keywords:** knowledge management; organizational climate; sharing.

**Used to search database:** SciELO, Scopus, Web of Science.

**Search filters:** The terms used were "organizational climate" AND "knowledge sharing", and for searches to be more effective, variations are used, therefore, we have to search were "knowledge shar \*"AND"organi \* ational climate."

**Search fields:** how each database has its specificities, this information was organized in Figure 1, below.

**Inclusion criteria:** complete articles published in national and international journals that relate Knowledge Management and Knowledge Sharing the organizational climate.

**Procedures for the selection of studies:** after using the above terms, the search filter, the articles were submitted to the following criteria for inclusion and exclusion:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Screening: Reading title, abstract and keywords;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> screening: reading the entire article.

**Criteria analyzed in the works found:** several points were analyzed in the articles selected as "Publication of the Year"; "Journal title"; "Goals"; "Nature of the survey"; "Research type"; "Data Collection" and "Sample".

## RESULTS

**Selection of Implementation of Results found:** The search resulted in the mentioned bases a total of 89 articles, all of which are found in international databases. In the first screening (reading title, abstract and keywords), it was observed that some articles were duplicates (ie they were in more than one database) 29 and other articles were excluded due to lack of grip. The results of this initial screening are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 1. Strings and Search Results in Database**

Data base	string Search	Quant.
scielo	"Knowledge shar *" AND "*" organi ational climate" in "All Indices"	5
Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("knowledge shar *") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("* organi ational climate")) AND PUBYEAR> 2008 AND PUBYEAR <2020	49
Web of Science	TOPIC: ("knowledge shar *") AND TOPIC: ("*organi ational climate") stipulated time: 2009-2019. Contents: SSCI	35

Source: Authors.

**Figure 2. Quantitative Data of searched items in Databases**

Data base	Scielo	Scopus	Web of Science	Total
Total Home Search	5	49	35	89
Duplicity <sup>1</sup>	1	5	19	25
deleted	2	12	15	29
Included in the review	3	32	1	35

Source: Authors.

Due to the purpose of this article, which is to analyze the impacts of organizational climate for the sharing of knowledge, it was necessary the second screening, which consisted of the full reading of the articles after the first screening, which resulted in 24 articles exclusion lack of adherence to the proposed objective. That is, although the 35 articles addressing the two issues, organizational climate and knowledge sharing, only 11 of them deal with climate impacts for sharing. In the articles examined in this review, most indicating the keyword "knowledge sharing" with some variations such as "knowledge sharing intentions" or "intention to share knowledge", then the terms "organizational climate" and "Knowledge Management", as It can be seen in Figure 3. As for the approach of research, in Figure 4 are listed the nature of research, data collection instrument and characterization of samples of items that were selected for qualitative analysis, ie those whose purpose relate to the organizational climate impacts knowledge sharing. All research has a quantitative nature, with only two qualit-quantitative research. Regarding the type of instrument used for data collection, all made the use of online questionnaires, as shown in Figure 4. It is worth noting that Boh and Wong (2013) conducted their research in two stages: first made in-depth interviews lasting between 45min. a 2h. Before the transcribed material, questionnaires to self answer that were sent to other employees have been proposed. In Figure 4, it can be observed that the data collection are all designed outside Brazil with a predominance of research in Asia and only two in Europe. In order to identify whether the researchers belong to the countries where the research and the presence of teams from different countries have been made, it has been identified

**Figure 3. Keywords of the systematic review articles analyzed**

Authors	Key words
Matić et al (2017)	knowledge sharing, theory of reasoned action, leadership, organizational climate, motivational drivers
Rodriguez et al (2016)	knowledge management; organization climate; shop floor workers
Jain, Goh and Sandhu (2015)	Trust Trust cognitive and affective; collecting knowledge; Knowledge donating; knowledge sharing; organizational climate
Reyes and Zapata (2014)	knowledge management; knowledge sharing; organizational climate; organizational learning
Chen, Chuang and Chen (2012)	attitude; intention; kms quality; kms self-efficacy; knowledge sharing; organizational climate
Joseph and Jacob (2011)	India; Information Technology employees; knowledge sharing intentions
Li, Zhu and Luo (2010)	knowledge sharing; knowledge-sharing climate; organizational climate; social cognitive theory
Tsai & Cheng (2010)	behavior; intention; knowledge sharing; organizational climate; self-efficacy; social cognitive theory
Han (2018)	Explicit knowledge; Knowledge management; Knowledge Sharing; Organizational climate; Personality traits; tacit knowledge
Boh & Wong (2013)	Codification; Knowledge sharing mechanisms; Manager role theory; Organizational climate; Personalization; social exchange
Radaelli et al (2011)	healthcare; intellectual capital; knowledge sharing; OLS regressions; organizational climate; survey

Source: Authors.

**Figure 4. Nature of research, data collection instrument and characterization of samples analyzed in the works in the systematic review**

Authors	Nature Search	Data Collection Instrument	data collection site	Sample Characterization
Matić et al (2017)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	Vojvodina Province, Serbia	873 employees in the public and private sector organizations
Rodriguez et al (2016)	Qualitative and quantitative	Quiz	Not mentioned	44 employees of an inserted auto parts plant in a truck plant with 7 partners (outsourced assembly line)
Jain, Goh and Sandhu (2015)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	Malaysia	231 knowledge workers, particularly executives in senior and middle management levels of 25 multinational companies
Reyes and Zapata (2014)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	Not mentioned	100 employees of universities (50 univ. Public and 50 univ. Private)
Chen, Chuang and Chen (2012)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	Taiwan	134 employees and managers associated with development projects for new products from major electronics manufacturing companies
Joseph and Jacob (2011)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	India	125 knowledge workers in the IT field
Li, Zhu and Luo (2010)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	China	142 developers of IT companies
Tsai and Cheng (2010)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	Taiwan	225 programmers and software workers
Han (2018)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	South Korea	215 engineers in R & D of major IT companies
BOH and Wong (2013)	Qualitative and quantitative	In-depth interviews and questionnaire	Asia	1036 employees from five different subsidiaries of the same organization
Radaelli et al (2011)	Quantitative (Survey)	Quiz	Italy	155 employees of three hospices and palliative care organizations

Source: Authors.

**Figure 5. Country of origin of the authors**

Title	Authors	Institution	Parents
Investigating the impact of organizational climate, motivational drivers, and empowering leadership on knowledge sharing	Matić D., Grubic-Nešić L. B. Milić	University of Novi Sad	Serbia
Workers' Perspective About Organizational Climate in Knowledge Management: Automotive Assembly-Line Case	IA Rodriguez, A. Garcia, SCF Morais, J. Muniz, Jr. TP Munyon	I-Shou University Universidade Estadual Paulista	Taiwan Brazil
Organizational climate, trust and knowledge sharing: insights from Malaysia	Jain KK MS Sandhu Goh SK	University of Tennessee India Institute of Management Monash University	USA India Malaysia
Relation between organizational climate and its dimensions and knowledge-sharing behavior among knowledge workers	Reyes MMV Zapata DIC	Universidad de San Buenaventura Universidad Católica	Colombia Colombia
Behavioral intention formation in knowledge sharing: Examining the roles of KMS quality, KMS self-efficacy, and organizational climate	Chen S.-S., Y.-W. Chuang, Chen P.-Y.	National Central University	Taiwan
Knowledge sharing among intentions IT professionals in India	Joseph B. Jacob M.	Rajagiri College of Social Sciences IAL Shipping Company Limited	India India
Effects of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation on employee knowledge sharing intentions	Li Z, Zhu T., Luo F.	South China University of Technology	China
Programmer perceptions of knowledge-sharing behavior under social cognitive theory	Tsai MT, Cheng NC	National Cheng-Kung University	Taiwan
The antecedents and dimensionality of knowledge-sharing intention: An empirical study of R & D Engineers in high-performing IT company	Han S.-H.	University of Georgia	USA
Organizational climate and perceived effectiveness manager: Influencing perceived usefulness of knowledge sharing mechanisms.	Boh WF, SS Wong	Nanyang Technological University	Singapore
Intellectual capital and knowledge sharing: the mediating role of organizational knowledge-sharing climate	Radaelli G. Spiller N., E. Lettieri Mura M.,	Politecnico di Milano University of Bologna	Italy Italy

Source: Authors.

which the country of origin of the authors, as shown in Figure 5, below. Interesting to note that the article by Rodriguez et al (2016) has four authors linked to a Brazilian university and the US, but was not mentioned in the survey sample site. Also, the research and Reyes Zapata (2014), which has two authors linked in Colombian universities, but the location of the sample is not mentioned in the text. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that happened authors partnerships from different universities and even countries, for example, the publications of Matić et al (2017) was attended by researchers from Serbia and Taiwan; Rodriguez et al (2016) in Brazil and the US and Jain, Sandhu and Goh (2015) from India and Malaysia. Through the figures 4 and 5 it can be observed that both the countries of origin of researchers and places of research, is predominant in Asia, highlighting the lack of studies that correlate the two variables in the other continents.

## DISCUSSION

Studies of organizational climate have played an important relevance in recent years, and its roots are derived mainly from studies of Industrial Psychology and Theory of Organizational Behavior. However, the theoretical first to deal with the issue was Kurt Lewin, even in the 30s, arguing that influences the function behavior of people in relation to the environment (Lück, 2010). Given this understanding, there is a proliferation of theories and measurement and intervention studies to equip organizations in fighting for their demands, enabling people to find a favorable environment to develop your skills and other skills, which will provide measurable results for organization and people. In this respect, in the mid-90s in the field of strategic management, knowledge management emerges as an organizational innovation exposing another way of looking and thinking about the organization, with man as the essential element in the creation process and sharing of knowledge, in order to generate increased organizational learning in order to benefit the organization through constant innovation. Thus, one can infer that knowledge is generated by man and that his share depends on the interaction between a sender and a receiver, ie, so that the sharing of knowledge to be successful there must be a motivation to transmit the information, and another way, a motivation to receive it. On the other hand, the organizational climate allows a company to achieve success, as long as it maintained a favorable environment for the attitudes and behaviors of employees (Lück, 2010).

Thus, the organizational climate influences the individuals who make up the organization, playing an important role in shaping behaviors of individuals and influencing their intentions to share knowledge (De Long & Fahey, 2000; Sveiby & Simons, 2002). Therefore, the link between knowledge management and organizational climate begins to settle from the importance given to the sharing of knowledge and relevance of social interactions for this sharing to occur. Given this understanding, one of the great challenges for contemporary organizations is to create a favorable working environment for people to break down the barriers that prevent them from performing knowledge sharing and, as instructed Ipe (2003), feel-motivated to transform the knowledge that has knowledge organizational, improving its production processes. However, as demonstrated by this systematic review of the literature, there is still a relative paucity of studies linking the two issues jointly, and its origins are fuzzy, and the

organizational climate, largely confused with other concepts such as: intrinsic motivation, satisfaction, quality of working life, perceived organizational support, psychological climate, affective commitment of employees with the organization, working autonomy, socio moral climate, organizational culture, work group identification, social psychology and social identification. These concepts presented above are dependent or independent variables which together affect the organizational climate, but if studied in isolated form are unable to define or measure the organizational climate as a whole. So this is only adhered to work strictly related studies the concept of organizational climate as a driving force that leads to a particular performance, which in this case is the sharing of knowledge. In pursuit of this understanding, Chen, Chuang and Chen (2012) conducted an empirical research, integrating the perspective of social cognitive theory and institutional theory, in order to develop a research model that can be used to investigate the factors influencing the share intraorganizational of knowledge. Among other factors, listed the organizational climate as a major factor in the intention to share knowledge by team members. The authors also found that, in climates where there are incentives for mutual trust, innovation and open conversations, people tend to have a positive attitude and become more likely to share their knowledge. Chen et al. (2012) also identified the attitude as the key factor for the intention of sharing knowledge, Han (2018) also sought to ascertain whether the organizational climate relates to the intention of sharing knowledge. In their study, the author found that organizational climate dimensions proposed by Letwin and Stringer (1968) such as rewards, conflict and organizational support, showed significant results in the intention of sharing knowledge, thus indicating that the more They feel employees is supported and the better is the general fellowship among members of a team, the more they share knowledge with each other. Therefore, the author concluded that employees share more knowledge when they realize mutual support between colleagues and organizations.

Joseph and Jacob (2011) developed a study in India, in order to understand the factors that increase or inhibit knowledge sharing intentions of individuals. The authors found the organizational climate as one of the factors that influence the intentions of individuals to share knowledge among their peers. Studies have concluded that the organizational climate fosters knowledge sharing and encourages people to have a positive attitude towards their own learning, predisposing them to overcome their resistance to learning. As Han (2008), Joseph and Jacob (2011) also found that organizational climate directly affects the intentions of individuals to engage in knowledge sharing behaviors and intentions of individuals to share knowledge can be enhanced in a climate in which individuals are highly confident with each other and the organization. The authors also argue that the more the elements of organizational climate are perceived by members of the organization - such as equity, innovative climate and membership - the greater the intention of sharing knowledge. Matić, Cabrilo, Grubic-Nešić and Milić (2017) developed a research on the psychological variables that imply the intention of sharing knowledge, assuming that organizational climate has influence on the action to share knowledge. Through this research could identify dimensions of organizational climate had a significant impact on the attitude of sharing knowledge, such as leadership, membership, justice and innovation. They also found positive impacts of the feeling of self-esteem in the

subjective norm and altruism in the attitude to share knowledge. They attested although the organizational climate has a significant impact on the subjective norm. Zhan and He (2012) subjective norm relate to the feeling of importance of the individual in the group, ie, approval or disapproval of their behavior by others. Jain, Sandhu and Goh (2015) emphasize the importance of studies on the impact of organizational climate and confidence for the sharing of knowledge, but warn that the topic has received little attention from the academics. Referencing various authors, they list several aspects of organizational climate that consider favorable to the sharing of knowledge, such as a high confidence climate between individuals and the organization; an open information flow of weather, climate tolerant to faults and a climate infused with pro-social norms. Just as in studies Matic et al. (2017), the membership element also impacted positively to the knowledge sharing practice in research Jain et al. (2015). In their research, the membership element, among other independent variables, was the most prominent to encourage the sharing of knowledge. This shows that a climate that favors social behavior is essential to encourage people to share knowledge. The authors (2015) also emphasize the importance of managers in promoting a climate of "union", in which employees have a strong sense of connection, regardless of whether it is emotional or professional, as well as human resource practices that provide greater social interaction among employees and increase the level of affiliation and trust between them. Studies of Tsai and Cheng (2010), as well as others, also show that the organizational climate affects the intentions to share knowledge and together with the management incentive is able to positively encourage knowledge sharing behavior among employees. The researchers defined as the main determinant for knowledge sharing behavior of the encouraging intentions of intensive knowledge workers, the expected results and self-efficacy. It is understood as self-efficacy, an individual's judgment about their ability to perform specific activities (Bandura, 1989).

Along the same lines, Li, Zhu and Luo (2010) concluded that the organizational climate elements (friendly relations, innovation and justice), as well as feelings of self-efficacy and outcome expectations, significantly contributed to the team's knowledge sharing behavior. Also stress that self-efficacy has contributed significantly to the results expectations in knowledge sharing. Boh and Wong (2013) sought to examine how perceptions of organizational climate and manager effectiveness influence the usefulness perceived by individuals in three types of knowledge sharing mechanisms identified based on literature: informal customization of knowledge sharing, knowledge sharing formal coding and customization of knowledge sharing. The empirical results showed that all three types of knowledge sharing mechanisms work equally effectively in a warm and cooperative climate. A competitive organizational climate, on the other hand, allows knowledge sharing in different contexts and social situations increasing preference of individuals for using coding knowledge sharing mechanisms and formal personalization, thus lowering the preference of individuals to use mechanisms informal customization of knowledge sharing. This finding has great relevance for this study because it highlights the importance of social interactions for the sharing of tacit knowledge. Regarding competitive organizational climate and insecurity traits Rodriguez, Garcia, Morais and Muniz (2016)

found as a result that constant threat of unemployment may negatively influence the climate of organizations. However, positive social interaction between members of the organization can preserve the sharing of knowledge, even when there are weaknesses in the organizational climate. Radaelli, Mura and Spiller (2011) understand the mood with a critical facilitator of knowledge sharing and conclude that increasing the climate for knowledge sharing, it creates motivation and opportunity for practitioners to be involved in the transmission of your information and experiences in order to increase the intellectual capital. Finally, Reyes and Zapata (2014) conducted a study to ascertain the impact of the organizational climate in the sharing of knowledge in two schools, one public and another private. The results showed to be different between the institutions. The correlation between climate and knowledge sharing behavior in the public organization was highly significant for all dimensions. However, the private institution, the results showed correlation between the two variables only in the dimension that relates to personal growth. These results differ from study of Kim and Lee (2005 apud Reyes & Zapata, 2014), which he pointed out that in the private sector there is greater awareness of knowledge sharing in the public sector.

## **Conclusions**

This study aimed, through a systematic literature review, assess the impacts of organizational climate for knowledge sharing, bringing about a mapping, studies correlating the two variables simultaneously. There is a consensus in the literature that knowledge is a strategic resource within organizations. The sharing of knowledge among individuals in an organization, so that provides an organizational knowledge as to generate constant innovation in its products and services is what actually will ensure lasting success for organizations inserted in the contemporary context. Therefore, become crucial discussions on knowledge sharing and knowledge management. On the other hand, there is also a consensus in the literature that the organizational climate influences the work environment as a whole, as to directly affect the behavior of individuals, bringing consequences for their individual performance and consequently for organizational development. Although there is still a relative paucity of research that address the two variables (organizational climate and knowledge sharing) we conclude that the organizational climate has a strong influence on the action to share knowledge between members of a team. From the results presented in this paper, it is found that where organizations have a favorable organizational climate there is an incentive for learning to occur, as well as an incentive for employees to collaborate with the development of the organization through the sharing of knowledge. Usually these organizations have in common an organizational climate prone to cooperation, mutual trust, fellowship, equality, membership and leadership incentives to innovative ideas, open communication, social interaction and autonomy. Thus, organizations that understand the man as a central element of its processes and knowledge as its strategic resource, must also design the organizational climate as empowering resource for knowledge sharing. With this, the organization will be able to create an enabling environment for increasing their organizational learning and hence, this will be an incentive for the occurrence of constant innovation in its products, processes and services. As future

developments, there is a need to carry out empirical research to bring evidence of the importance of organizational climate for the sharing of knowledge, that in several organizations.

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