Chapter 4
Knowledge Sharing Initiatives in Software Companies: A Mapping Study

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ABSTRACT

This mapping study aims to investigate knowledge sharing initiatives in software companies based on existing studies from 2005 to 2017. Initially, search string was applied in seven digital repositories. Snowballing and direct search on publications were conducted to reduce the limitation of accessing specific databases. Regarding 15 selected studies, a variety of aspects; publication year and source, research type, purpose, and types of knowledge been used; were concerned. According to findings, a majority of studies have been focused on factors affecting knowledge sharing and point out organizational commitment as the most undergoing influencer on knowledge sharing. Findings further prove criticality of knowledge sharing for sustainability of software companies. Contrary to that, findings provide convincing evidence on improper knowledge sharing systems as the highly referred problem associated with knowledge sharing in software companies and provide new directions to future research.

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is a critical organizational resource and the management of this knowledge is key to long-term sustainability and success of organizations. Efficient management of knowledge is not possible without a proper process of knowledge sharing (Paulin and Sunneson, 2012; Andreasian and Andreasian, 2013). Knowledge sharing is the process which integrates and merges knowledge among each individual and teams in an organization by exchanging each other’s tacit knowledge, and explicit knowledge (Paulin and Sunneson, 2012; Andreasian and Andreasian, 2013). Most of the issues arising in the software companies are identified as a result of inefficient knowledge sharing. To improve the organizational performance knowledge should be shared in a structured way that the right knowledge is conveyed to the right person at the right time.

Knowledge sharing in software companies has been attained a considerable attention of researchers in recent years. This paper focuses on identifying current literature about knowledge sharing in software companies by employing a mapping study. The contribution of this mapping study consists of baseline data and recommendations which could be a source of general guidance for academic researchers in stimulating future research in the context of knowledge sharing. In this mapping study, includes previous studies published since 2005 to 2017. Research studies related to knowledge sharing which are conducted outside the software industry are also taken into account in certain situations. This paper addresses the following aspects: distribution of the studies over past years, source of publication, type of the research, knowledge types been used, technology usage, purposes, benefits and problems related to knowledge sharing. Furthermore, snowballing and direct search for the studies published by researchers of the previously selected studies were performed (Erica et al., 2014).

The rest of this paper presents the background of this mapping, discussion of the research method, results, implications and limitations of the study, and finally conclusion and future research possibilities of the study.

BACKGROUND

Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing could be identified as a process between units, teams and organizations where people exchange their knowledge with others (Andreasian and Andreasian, 2013; Anthony, 2013). Knowledge sharing starts at the individual level, since every person has tacit and explicit knowledge to share with others. Sharing
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