

UNDERSTANDING KNOWLEDGE HIDING AMONG PRE-SERVICE STUDENT TEACHERS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge sharing is an essential component of an educational institution. It helps in the overall growth and development of an institution. However, the phenomenon of knowledge hiding, where individuals withhold information or expertise, has gathered attention in recent years. Knowledge hiding in the realm of education, particularly among pre-service school teachers has a significant impact on student learning as well as professional development. This paper explores the prevalence and determinants of knowledge hiding behavior among Pre-Service teachers and its repercussions on the quality of interpersonal interactions among students, mentors, and peers within teacher education program. Data collection employs a survey technique with questionnaire as a tool, with a sample of Pre-Service student teachers enrolled in teacher education programs. Knowledge hiding behavior are not uncommon among Pre-Service student teachers, with factors such as competition, fear of judgement, and lack of trust influencing their decision to withhold information. This study highlights that knowledge hiding can hinder effective communication and collaboration among student teachers, potentially compromising their learning experiences and professional development. The study aids the teacher education programs to address knowledge hiding behavior and promote a culture of open collaboration and knowledge sharing. A sample of 173 Pre-Service student teachers was taken. Questionnaire was prepared which was further converted into google form and then send to different education institution of north India. On the basis of responses level of knowledge hiding behaviour was calculated. By understanding the factors contributing to knowledge hiding behavior, educational institutions can implement interventions to foster a more open and collaborative learning environment.

KEYWORDS: Knowledge Sharing; Knowledge hiding; Pre-Service Teachers; Prevalence; Determinants

INTRODUCTION

Pre-service teachers are those individuals who pursue professional training in order to become teachers. They are typically enrolled in teacher education programs at colleges or universities where they acquire basic knowledge and skills to prepare themselves for teaching careers. They are the future educators who will shape the mind of future generations. Pre-service teachers offer novel concepts, cutting edge instructional strategies and new view points in the teaching profession. They have the opportunities to engage in community service and learning activities. In this context knowledge sharing plays a vital role in future development of educational institutions. A worrying problem in the organizational environments, including higher education institutions, is knowledge concealment, and it is defined as the deliberately holding back the information required by others. According to Connelly et al., (2012) knowledge-concealing was described by researchers as "an intentional attempt by an individual to withhold or hide knowledge that another person has asked." Information concealing can undermine employee collaboration. For instance, if someone conceals knowledge, he might not focus entirely on the task, which could impede the creation of new knowledge. Kidwell et al. (2000), describe knowledge-management as the process of converting rational skills, and knowledge into long-term value contributions. The idea of knowledge sharing is crucial to an organization's overall growth. Hiding information does not equate to ignorance. These behaviours do not provide a safe environment for pre-service student teachers who are finishing their teacher education programs. The quality of interpersonal communication in their learning environment as well as the professional development of pre-service teachers can be greatly impacted by knowledge concealment. Sharing knowledge, however, is a crucial component of an educational institution's growth. According to Howell and Annansinghi (2013), Sharing our knowledge is a requisite and acceptable part of knowledge-development (Tang & Martins, 2021) yet, knowledge-hiding is commonly used in the companies, in place of knowledge sharing. According to Babcock (2004), Firms in the fortune 500 companies experience the minimal of USD 31.5 billion annually as a result of their employees' inability to foster knowledge sharing. In addition, a study carried out in Additionally, in a survey done in China, 46% of the participants admitted to having ever held knowledge, while 76% of US respondents said they had previously concealed knowledge (Connelly et al., 2012). Organizations that wish to enhance knowledge

sharing must comprehend why employees conceal information at work (Tang & Martins, 2021). Most common forms of knowledge-hiding in academia are “Playing Dumb (PD-KH), Rationalized Knowledge-hiding (R-KH), and Evasive Knowledge-hiding (E-KH)”. Whenever a knowledge provider, provides false information to a knowledge seeker, this is known as “Evasive knowledge hiding (E-KH)”. When the knowledge provider withholds their expertise by acting as though they are ignorant of the situation, this is known as “Playing dumb knowledge-hiding (PD-KH)”. When the knowledge provider explains withholding information, it can be described as rationalized knowledge-hiding, or R-KH. Evasive concealment occurs when someone delivers false or partial information or makes a commitment to supply the desired information later on without really intending to. Playing dumb involves the hider’s ignorance of the requested information. “Playing dumb and Evasive hiding” both entail deceit, and reasoned hiding doesn't, (Offergelt et al., 2019; Zhao et al., 2016). Apart from the aforementioned three categories, two additional aspects have been suggested in recent research: Bullying Concealment and Counter-Questioning (Jha & Varkkey 2018; Yuan et al., 2020). When a knowledge provider chooses to counter-question or seek clarification on their own instead of responding to a knowledge seeker, this is known as counter-questioning. Hiding information is an emotionally motivated behaviour. According to Lazarus's (1991a, 1991b, 1991c) cognitive-motivational-relational (CMR) theory of emotion, people evaluate their surroundings or events or come into contact with them in light of their objectives, drives, or worldviews. Individuals are driven to respond when their evaluation of the situation or interaction has personal significance. If an information request is interpreted as threatening or dangerous, it should be looked into because the emotional reaction is probably psychological by nature. As far as the researchers’ knowledge, no prior studies have given pre-service student teachers a comprehensive insight of the psychological mechanism underlying KH. Understanding the psychology of why pupils do things is crucial to improving general organizational knowledge.

The “Conservation of Resources Theory” (COR) define resources as "Those objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or that serve as a mean for attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies" (Hobfoll,1989). The theory contends that the issues arise when there is a breakdown of funds and resources. When employees experience stressors like tension or anxiety, they begin to gather extra resources that can help them get through the

situation. However, if their reputation is not protected, they may experience workplace exclusion or encounter uncivil behaviour from their coworkers, which may compel them to conceal their knowledge from others. In this study, the information is gathered from the COR theory. It is put together in this study by viewing T-shaped skill, rudeness, and workplace exclusion as resources. When students see similar activities in their organizations, they also respond by defending their resources, such as knowledge. They won't impart the knowledge that others expect of them if they believe that their peers are disregarding them. The reduction in an employee's resources will make them more inclined to keep their expertise to themselves. Persistent rudeness has the potential to reduce the resources needed to motivate staff. Psychological ownership attitudes among employees, which they rely on to safeguard their information, are one of the fundamental causes of knowledge concealment in educational institutions (Koay et al. 2020). Students who feel a sense of ownership over something tend to keep knowledge from their peers hidden. They believe that information is their own and that they are free to act however they like. Understanding the invention can encourage someone to study more about it in order to eventually adopt it. However, it hinders the rate of innovation if students engage in knowledge concealment. Because they tend to hide knowledge, people reject knowledge about innovation and avoid learning new things. This kind of behaviour is detrimental to both the academic success of a school and the learning of its students. Facilitating the efficient sharing of knowledge and information is crucial for promoting professional development and learning. An important part of this interchange is played by pre-service student teachers, who are currently pursuing their education. Concern over pre-service student teachers' tendency to conceal information and its possible effects on interpersonal communication in the classroom is developing.

The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of information concealment behaviour on interpersonal communication in educational contexts and investigate how common it is among pre-service student instructors. For the benefit of educational institutions, the study may also help develop tactics and treatments that lessen knowledge concealment and improve communication. In order to determine the proper explanations for pre-service student teachers' knowledge concealment behaviour, this study reviewed the literature on the subject. The following addition to the topic of knowledge concealing in an organization is made by this paper. First of all, it offers a thorough and in-depth summary of the most recent KH literature. Secondly, the

combined research findings on the precursors of Knowledge-hiding provide an explanation of the widespread psychological process involved in knowledge-hiding. Thirdly, the cumulative findings guide future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge-hiding behavior is not a common occurrence in today's scholastic world. Even though knowledge exchange among the employees, has been highlighted in different workplace settings, hardly any investigation is done regarding the knowledge-hiding practices in the educational institutions. Majority of the teachers who engage in knowledge-hiding behaviors are associated to "rationalized hiding" which is further adhere to "evasive hiding" and "playing dumb". The pedants "play dumb" with the seniors and they react "rationalized" with their colleagues. According to "Mohayidin, Azirawani, Kamaruddin and Idawati (2007)", primary concern of all the universities is to encourage quality over quantity, with students having critical, reflective and communicative skills as part of their academic performance, which thereby, contributes towards the Nation's goal of developing an information model for the society. According to "Servin and De Brun (2005)", outcomes, that the employees gave preference to learn from their peers rather than from their seniors. Furthermore, "Husted and Michailova (2002)", claimed that because they believe that their bosses dislikes' the subordinates, as they seems' to know more than they do, juniors purposefully hoard knowledge to themselves. Knowledge-hiding in educational settings is a blend of both collaboration and competition. While knowledge-hiding has not yet been broadly examined in the educational environment, the study aims to deepen the understanding of the personal (individual-level) and conditional (job-related) factors that affect evasive knowledge-hiding (EKH) within academia. The findings reveal that one's own motivation is a major reason of knowledge-hiding in disrespectful academic relationships and also explores how interaction between individual and situations may influence the severity of organizational misbehavior. The study focuses on transmission of knowledge in the educational institutions by focusing on those situations, where colleagues respond to the direct requests by hiding their knowledge. The mediating role of teamwork, offers practical solutions on how knowledge transfer can be improved between erroneous and knowledgeable scholars, as stated by Tomislav Hernaus et al.

(2018). In lieu of sharing knowledge with the colleagues, employees feel hesitant to do so and there can be variety of reasons behind their hesitance, like fear of losing power, authority or their status. Employees may be hesitant of being judged by their colleagues and they make an adjustment in their behavior according to the situation. Due to the employees' actions, it is necessary to work and investigate in the field of "knowledge' hiding" (Muqadas et al., 2017). Evasive hiding is more effective when interaction between individuals and mistrust are present. Employees who make false promises to provide the required information later, foster interpersonal mistrust among colleagues, which results in "knowledge-hiding". When coworkers don't trust each other with regard to expertise or necessary information, creates negative feedback that encourages employees to engage in counterproductive work practices. Employees react equally in an unfavorable way (Poortvliet & Giebels, 2012). It also encourages and leads to development of a feeling of fulfillment by punishing others in an unfair way (Zhou & Shipton, 2012; Min, 2018). According to the study, there is a considerable beneficial moderating effect of perceived supervisory support on both evasive and reasoned knowledge-hiding. The study is predicated on two key theories: Gouldner's (1960) "Conception of the Norm of Reciprocity" and Blau's (1964) "Social Exchange Theory". These theories had a noteworthy influence on the relationship between employee innovation and knowledge concealing. According to Fong et al. (2018), creativity is essential for improving both individual and organizational performance. As a result, knowledge concealing has the unintended consequence of reducing both individual and organizational creativity, Hina Samdani et al., (2019). The Psychology of Knowledge-hiding trailing in an organization is considered threatening or harmful and reasons for knowledge-hiding should be investigated. No integrated study is provided earlier for knowledge-hiding behaviour. The study stated that it is necessary to understand the psychology of employees, as why they are responding with knowledge in this way, Rezwan et al. (2021). Research that was based on the idea of social exchange theory found that humorous workplace bullying would cause bad interpersonal relationships among employees, and this gave encouragement to the knowledge-hiding behavior among them. While working on a new project employees tend to hide knowledge with their colleagues. When employees of an organization are found to be primarily engaged in "knowledge-hiding", that organization can become a "knowledge-hiding organization". The performance of a team can be measured by, how closely the employees adhere to an organization's objectives, which includes performance, cost,

and timeliness. Creative ideas of an employee have an influence on the success of the team's performance. If the needed information is confidential and cannot be shared because the seniors have not allowed to share this information, then rationalized hiding takes place in an organization, Yin Hang (2021). Information hiding has a favourable relationship with performance drive, which has no connection with information hiding. It additionally has a positive association with students' achievement in school and a sense of relatedness. It was found that while students' academic performance was adversely affected by "evasive" and justified information hiding, "playing dumb" has less influence on them. The research found no evidence of a stabilizing relationship between academic achievement and academic self-confidence or all the three forms of knowledge-hiding. An individual's motivation hinders only when the person perceives the ethical difference between himself and other team members to actively share information, which results in poor information exchange evaluations within the team. There has been a positive correlation between honesty and knowledge-hiding. It was shown that friendship at workplace tempered the connection between integrity and team knowledge-hiding. Knowledge-hiding behaviour at team-level affects the effective working strategy of an organization, Shuo Xing (2022). According to earlier research, abuse at work is linked to knowledge concealment behaviour, or "playing dumb" (Zhao et al., 2016). Furthermore, rudeness can incite victims' bad feelings, which may lead them to exact revenge by refusing to provide other beings the information they have been asked for, claiming not to have it or not to possess it. In other words, victims of rudeness may find it legitimate to choose to remain silent in such situations. Social exchanges require interpersonal interactions, and previous research suggests that information concealment is encouraged in the workplace when there are weak personal relationships (Butt & Ahmad, 2020). The frequency of mistrust among employees at workplace indicates an absence of satisfying relationships, that undermine respect and trust between people and encourage them to hide information. Research has shown that when workers witness workplace incivility, they often hide information about it.

OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the influence of knowledge-hiding behaviour on interpersonal communication among pre-service student teachers.
2. To find out the level of knowledge-hiding behaviour of student teachers.

HYPOTHESIS

H_0 – There is no significant influence of Knowledge-hiding behaviour on Interpersonal communication.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

This study will employ a quantitative research design i.e. survey method to collect and analyse data related to knowledge-hiding behaviour and interpersonal communication. The primary data collection method will be a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to different educational institutions of North India.

Sample/ Sampling Area

The study group consisted of 173 Pre-Service student teachers of different educational institutions in the northern region of India. Participants percentage was female (90.2%) and males (9.8%).

Tool

Questionnaire tool was developed which was further converted into google form is send for validation. Google form was sent via mail to pre service teachers of different education institutes. Data collection was done on the basis of responses. It includes questions to assess knowledge-hiding behaviour, interpersonal communication skills, and factors influencing both. The participants were given the assurances that their confidentiality would be maintained, and that the information gathered would only be utilized for educational research. Through personal and professional connections, participants were contacted to gauge their level of awareness hiding behaviour and assess how it affected their ability to communicate with others. It was ensured that the questions are clear, relevant, and aligned with the research objectives. Engagement in participant observation and interact with Pre-Service students' teachers in their natural settings to understand their behaviour, interaction and context of knowledge-hiding and its influence on interpersonal communication.

Knowledge-hiding scale:

Knowledge-hiding behaviour of student teachers in educational institutions were assessed using a Likert scale with five-point ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. The 21 items on this scale indicate “Rationalized hiding, Playing Dumb and Evasive-hiding ability”. The scale comprises of elements such as “I like to work independently on my classroom assignments without sharing anything with my peers” (Evasive-Hiding), “I pretend I don’t know the information” (Playing Dumb), “I like to help my classmates but instead give them different information from what they asked for”. The researcher translated the elements into understandable language, and the experts in the field of educational organization, evaluated the translation to determine its applicability and appropriateness, to test the validity of the scale. Expert opinions have been examined separately and an appropriate layout was chosen by consensus.

Interpersonal communication:

Interpersonal communication in educational institutions was also evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, which ranges from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. The scale was clubbed with the knowledge-hiding scale to measure the impact of knowledge-hiding on interpersonal communication. This scale encompasses product like “I think that poor listening of my group members prevented me from conversing with others”, “social anxiety hinders my ability to converse with others”. Feedback of this scale was also reviewed independently by experts.

Statistical Technique

Descriptive statistical technique is used to summarize data and to provide an overview of knowledge-hiding behaviour and interpersonal communication. Sample of 173 was taken in consideration. A questionnaire was prepared which was further converted to google form and sent to different educational institutions of North Indian region. According to the given objectives, the level of knowledge-hiding behaviour needs to be calculated. Responses received were further divided into codes to calculate the level of knowledge-hiding behaviour. The scores were then tabulated and given in Table 1.

Table 1

Level	Range	Percentage
Low level of Knowledge-	12-23	25%

hiding Behaviour		
Average level of Knowledge-hiding Behaviour	24-37	49%
High level of Knowledge-hiding Behaviour	38-63	24%

Above table shows the distribution of knowledge-hiding behavior across three levels: low, average, and high. The range of scores for each level of knowledge-hiding behavior is displayed in the "Range" column". The range for "low level of knowledge hiding behaviour" is 12-23; "average level of knowledge hiding behaviour" is 24-37; "high level of knowledge hiding behaviour" is 38-63. The "Percentage" column shows the percentage of people who fall into each level. It can be seen that the majority of people (49%) exhibit an average level of knowledge-hiding behavior. A smaller percentage of people exhibit a low level (25%) or high level (24%) of knowledge-hiding behavior. Further the data suggests that a majority of pre-service teachers display an average level of knowledge-hiding behavior. This could be due to a number of factors, such as fear of judgment, a desire to appear competent, or a lack of support.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Purpose of this study is to determine how knowledge-hiding behaviour and interpersonal communication are related in educational institutes. Knowledge-hiding is a social stressor at workplace and there are some unfavourable affects linked with it. Range and percentage were calculated on the basis of quartile in the above table. From the above Table (i.e. Table 1) it has been found that low level of knowledge-hiding behaviour was performed by 44 student teachers which in percentage was 25%. Hence it was found that 25% students don't hide knowledge. For average level of knowledge-hiding behaviour 86 student teachers which were in percentage was 49%. Hence it was found that 49% students hide knowledge. For High level of knowledge-hiding behaviour 43 student teachers which were in percentage was 24%. The percentage was calculated based the quartile. In the above table after calculation of percentage, correlation was calculated to know the level of knowledge-hiding behaviour. After the tabulation of data for correlation it was found that there is a

very less difference in low level of knowledge-hiding behaviour and high level of knowledge-hiding behaviour.

DISCUSSION

Results of this study reveal that faculty knowledge-hiding in pre-service education institutions may have a direct influence on academic interpersonal communication and turnover intention. The environment and culture of educational institutions should encourage and support knowledge sharing. It is found that Pre-service teachers mostly worried about receiving unfavorable feedback if they show their lack of understanding. This may lead them towards hiding their knowledge which may hinder their capacity to develop. Pre-service educators who feel insecure about their skills may conceal their expertise to avoid coming out as unintelligent. This may keep individuals from asking for advice or assistance, which would impede their ability to advance professionally. Pre-service teachers may unintentionally mislead their students, which could lead in misconceptions. Due to the unsupportive learning environment and lack of trust students may feel discouraged from participating. By hiding their knowledge, pre-service teachers may lose out opportunities to grow as an educator and learn from their mistakes.

In a study on “knowledge-hiding in organizations”, Connelly et al., (2012) came on the conclusion that a lack of trust among coworkers can contribute to the inappropriate conduct of knowledge-hiding. Some of the researchers found that people who are forced to hide evasively and act stupid sometimes feel betrayed and want to exact revenge. It was found that when students involve themselves in a sense of possession, they are prone to hide knowledge from their peers.

CONCLUSION

From the above data it can be concluded that as most of the data lies in average range. It shows that there is good positive correlation in average range. It can be said that most of the student teachers in educational institutions hide knowledge depending on the situation which they are comfortable with. If they find that this knowledge can be shared they can. If they found that it's good to hide knowledge rather than sharing it, they hide the knowledge. This study revealed that knowledge-hiding behaviour among Pre-Service student teachers has an average impact on

interpersonal communications. It was observed that when student teachers engage in knowledge-hiding, it leads to distrust, hinder exchange of ideas and ultimately affect the quality of their interpersonal relationship. As a result, it can create an environment of distrust in classrooms. By not sharing insights student teachers miss the opportunities to learn from their peers as well as mentors, which leads to gap in knowledge and skills. Knowledge-hiding can vandalize the interpersonal relationships which reduces the morale of student teachers. It hinders the development of collaborative skills which is an essential part of teaching. Understanding and addressing the reasons behind knowledge-hiding can help educational institutions identify issues such as lack of trust and inadequate support system and fosters a more collaborative and open learning environment. It also leads to more effective teacher training programs, better prepared educators and improve the educational outcomes for the student teachers.

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