# INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOUR, COMPETENCY & TEACHING AND LEARNING PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM MALAYSIAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper aims to examine the influence of social intelligence on knowledge sharing behavior, competency and teaching and learning performance among academicians in Malaysian Private Universities. Specifically, the relationship between (1) social intelligence and knowledge sharing behavior, (2) social intelligence and competency and (3) social intelligence and teaching and learning performance are being proposed in this study. Moreover, this study is expected to contribute to the following: (1) Malaysian Private Universities in the formation of an ideal competency model for academicians, (2) body of knowledge, specifically in the field of teaching and learning performance in Malaysian Private Universities and (3) literature in human resources pertaining to social intelligence, knowledge sharing behavior, competency and teaching and learning performance.

Keywords: Social Intelligence, Knowledge Sharing Behavior, Competency, Teaching and Learning Performance, Malaysian Private Universities.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, knowledge sharing has obtained lots of attention among various scholars [1]. Knowledge sharing is considered to be the most crucial process in terms of the structure of knowledge management. Moreover, the fundamental concept of motivating people to share knowledge in organizations and universities are considered vital in all areas within the knowledge management environment [2]. Knowledge sharing behavior is one of the crucial factors that contributes towards academicians' performance. As being argued [3], academicians are generally very rigid in terms of sharing knowledge and intellectual resources.

Knowledge is derived from attributes based on interaction between individuals at various levels. Furthermore, knowledge is not only through documentation or directories but automatically it will be stored in peoples' minds through their attitudes and the way they behave [4]. Most of the time, knowledge can be seen in many perspectives as well as levels such as individual, group and also organizational level. As depicted by scholars [5], these are the methods towards identifying the knowledge in an in-depth manner. Knowledge is considered as a valuable resource as it is considered as evidence and concentrated to universities. In addition to that, academicians who are willing to contribute assist to increase competencies as individuals and accepts the entire university as an entity. In other words, knowledge sharing is solely linked to social intelligence. However, there are limited studies that have been conducted on the link between social intelligence and knowledge sharing.

Generally, there are four forms in terms of knowledge that comprises of professional knowledge, coordinating knowledge, object-based knowledge and know-how [6]. Other than that, this knowledge can be categorized in terms of explicit and tacit knowledge. Additionally, explicit knowledge is being associated with documents and repositories [7], where else tacit knowledge is acquired in the work and stays with individuals based on attitude and experience [8]. Furthermore, explicit knowledge is generally easy to organize, transfer and execute to the rest. However, tacit knowledge is rather difficult to be communicated and has weakness in terms of formalizing things. Tacit knowledge is considered to be one of the most crucial knowledge as it related to employees learning and experience at the same time it is also the most difficult document to manage and share [9,10]. Generally, knowledge is being considered as one of the main resources in terms of competitive advantage and essential in order to achieve long-term goals and organizational success which includes industrial and technological changes [11]. Knowledge is also considered as a crucial asset towards the growth of an organization [12].

Prior scholars noted that sharing of knowledge is very difficult but it is vital in terms of managing the effectiveness of the knowledge task itself [13]. The knowledge that is created should be shared among members of the organization proactively. The process of sharing the knowledge itself plays a major role in organizations as it leads towards coming up with new knowledge, the changes to be made on the old knowledge and synthesizing the knowledge in the future [14]. Besides that, knowledge sharing also relates to the long run performance of the universities [15] with the assistance of both technology and employees [16].

Knowledge sharing behavior is still considered as a new area of research whereby the actual way of measurement has not been derived in a complete manner [17]. Knowledge sharing behavior is stated as the attitude which is part of the dimension of competency which affects the individual's feelings, as reflected in the knowledge sharing process [18]. Organizations recognizes the essentialness of knowledge sharing behavior in order to achieve competitive advantage, enabling skill and competency development [19]. This will assist in the improvement of knowledge management aspects by ensuring what the organizations' knows and can perform. Nevertheless, research pertaining to knowledge sharing behavior among academicians is scarce.

Competency model or competency framework is being used widely in numerous organizations [20]. Competency scrutinizes the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that are required to perform efficiently and effectively in an organization [21]. Prior researcher asserted that competency resembles characteristics that individuals' portrays on a daily basis and this is where it can be a motive, trait or social role [22]. Competency is being regarded as knowledge, skills, and quality of an effective manager and leader must always have within them [23]. Competency comprises of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that employees are expected to contribute successfully within a particular organizational context [24].

Performance is also known as an achievement of the task that has been assigned and the outcome would be accomplished within the desired timeline [25]. This is where academicians' performance is usually defined as an educator who provides education. Teaching and learning performance is a very crucial factor that can ensure there is progress in the universities. Teaching and learning performance is related towards knowledge on the job as well as ensuring work has been completed in a correct manner [26]. Other than that, teaching and learning performance focuses on academicians' capabilities and expertise which eventually lead towards performance [27]. Teaching and learning performance is deliberated where an individual will have to perform after employment whereby action is being considered as performance [26] Consequently, academicians have to be equipped with the proper skills in order to perform well in the universities.

Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in Malaysia have gone through a drastic change from the 19th century to the 21st century [28]. Thus, the need for having academicians with a higher level of competency is crucial. The educational system is considered as the development of any nations and academicians are anticipated to be the nation builders.

The role of academician cannot be overlooked in the progress, prosperity and developmental process of a nation. This is where the universities' success solely depends on the effectiveness of the performances of all individual who establishes the human capital [28] Moreover, research is needed to be conducted at universities and it would be ideal for it to be linked with the latest methods in terms of teaching and learning performance for better opportunity [29] Although the emphasis on teaching and learning performance has been given to academicians, Malaysia still has little progress with only approximately 5% of the university research outputs being commercialized [30].

Social intelligence will assist to ensure the process of knowledge sharing behavior is carried out without any disruptions or interferences [31]. Accordingly, knowledge sharing is being posited as a human behavior which apprehends activities such as exchanging explicit and/or implicit experiences, embedding ideas and skills that facilitate knowledge for innovation at the workplace [32]. It is critical for a person to get to know the feelings of others and to motivate and manage their own feelings when building relationships with others. Succeeding in life is almost impossible without the existence of social intelligence [33]. Although many studies have been carried out empirically, limited considerations have been undertaken on the linkage between social intelligence and knowledge sharing behavior. Social intelligence is difficult if cannot be achieved in order to lead a successful life. In addition, social intelligence helps individuals to develop a healthy relationship with other people. Other than that, socially intelligent people are generally well behaved both professionally and personally. Moreover, social intelligence is useful in terms of solving problems in social life and helps to tackle various social tasks. Hence, social intelligence is crucial to be further developed in the education sector [34]. It was noted by prior researchers that having a high level of social intelligence is extremely essential, in order to be successful in life [35, 36]. Those with a high level of social intelligence are usually more popular than the rest as popularity leads to happiness especially when it is related to the academic accomplishments [37]. A higher level of social intelligence increases as the age and experience of an individual increase [38].

Social intelligence has been considered as one of the most crucial and fundamental problems in areas that are related to social sciences and humanities [39]. Other than that, social intelligence allows individuals to adapt to a happier life when the level of social intelligence is high. Those who have achieved a high level of social intelligence are generally very popular thus it leads to happiness and carries an important, especially towards academic achievement. Hence, the application and concepts are considered important in the educational arena. Social intelligence is generally a feature that a success has been cultivated in social relationship and has not been able to be achieved by training or study [40]. In other words, a healthy relationship among academician can be cultivated when they have proper communication skills. Academicians' needs to make every effort towards selfimprovement and improvement in terms of performance in order for the values developed will help to enhance the universities' productivity [41]. Thus, the outcome would also contribute towards the academicians' performance by having the proper knowledge, skills, and attitude towards achieving competitive advantage, which depicts the attainment of competency level. Even though there has been extensive research on competency, lack of empirical evidence has been found to exhibit the association between social intelligence and competency [42].

Therefore, this study is being proposed to examine the influence of social intelligence on knowledge sharing behavior and competency among academicians in Malaysian private universities. Specifically, this study aims to identify the following: (1) relationship between social intelligence and knowledge sharing behavior, (2) relationship between social intelligence and competency and (3) relationship between social intelligence.

# 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND & PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT

The notion of social intelligence was initially anticipated by Edward L. Thorndike in the 1920s, nevertheless failed to attract substantial attention [43]. The concept attained its importance in 1983 when Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner projected the theory of multiple intelligences in his work "Frames of Mind". Prior scholars gained much popularity with the manuscript "The New Science of Human Relationships" [44], whereas others [45] describes social intelligence as the capability to negotiate and cooperate with each other. Furthermore, it was posited that the concept of social intelligence is essential for examining associations with other constructs [46].

Most of the studies that have been conducted on knowledge sharing behavior has utilized the explanation and theory on the basis of either testing the observation or explaining the outcome. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) are being utilized in terms of any research pertaining to knowledge sharing behavior. Additionally, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) whereby it involves attitude towards behavior, subjective norm, behavioral attention, and behavior. The additional construct would be perceived behavioral control which is added to Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). Most of the research reveals that the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) are utilized in predicted behavior. This is where the social attitude and personality traits are used in terms of predicting and explaining the behavior.

Another theory that is deemed important to focus on would be social cognitive theory whereby it links social intelligence and knowledge sharing behavior. Prior researchers posited that Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) will be utilized towards examining on how employees' will use the factors of knowledge sharing towards having a good relationship among each other by further enhancing one's behavior from both personal cognitions and social environment through social cognitive theory (SCT) [47].

Social cognitive theory (SCT) examines a person's behavior which is shaped and controlled by influences of social systems and also the person's expectation and beliefs [47]. To add on, the social cognitive theory also further explains the importance of it being used in terms of knowledge sharing behavior. Furthermore, individuals' who are looking at utilizing knowledge sharing focuses on the place where communication, interaction, and friendship is being formed other than just focusing on seeking information or knowledge. This is the main reason social cognitive theory emphasizes the importance of implementing knowledge sharing on a daily basis. Competency is associated with knowledge sharing within organizations [48]. There are certain perspectives of competency that are evident within the literature; competency associates well with organizational needs and education [49]. Consequently, the following is being proposed:

#### Proposition 1: Social Intelligence positively influences Knowledge Sharing Behavior

The concepts of intelligence and competence are often applied as synonyms [50]. Several distinguishing features generally acknowledged in the literature are the contextspecificity of competence [51] and the more general meaning of intelligence constructs across situations or contexts [50]. Competence appears to be subject to modification and learning [52] whereas intelligence is comparatively stable over time and seen as hereditary to a large extent [53]. However, intelligence is often a necessary part of the evaluation of competence [50]. Previous researchers have stated that academicians in a university will only be effective in performing their work if they have the right knowledge, attitude, and skills. Hence, in order to perform better in their work, having the right competency is essential. The theory relating to competency began even before the terminology of competency was established, with research in the area of behavioral psychology.

According to Bloom and other researchers [51] the most influential typology for competencies was used in an educational environment [52]. Bloom's taxonomy is based on three domains of activities which are educationally based such as cognitive, affective and psychomotor. The cognitive were related to the knowledge (mental skills) followed by effective for feeling or emotional areas (attitudes) and lastly, psychomotor were more towards manual or physical skills (skills). Bloom's taxonomy is often referred to as KSA (knowledge, skills, and attitudes). In addition, Bloom's original work was not part of the competency in the psychomotor domain. Later on, this was included by other scholars [53], where they suggested that seven major categories should be included such as perception, set, guided response, mechanism, complex overt response, adaptation and origination [54]. Moreover, it was posited that work that was established by McClelland who is the founder of modern competency theory emphasized the validity of intelligence and aptitude test as part of the challenge [55]. Additionally, researchers [56] came up with the proposal on evaluating individuals based on their specific competencies such as suggesting that competency is considered the superior predictor of employees' success as compared to overall intelligence. Consequently, the following is being proposed:

# Proposition 2: Social Intelligence positively influences Competency

Teaching and learning performance is termed as a scalable action, behavior, and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that is linked with and contribute to organizational goals [56]. In other words, teaching and learning performance is very much related to academicians' work performance. Thus, the theory used will be related to work performance. Work performance constitutes of behavior or actions that are relevant to an organization's goals [57]. Besides that, Campbell asserted that work performance is not the consequence or result of an action but rather the action itself.

Work performance is basically the behavior that can be evaluated in terms of the extent to which it contributes to organizational value [58]. Performance is viewed as a single construct but several researchers agree that it is actually a multidimensional construct factor [57] There are a few models that emphasizes on this factor which includes twofactor model [60, 61] and eight-factor model of work performance [57]. In terms of academicians' teaching and learning performance, the focus will be more towards task performance whereby the breakdown consists of workspecific task proficiency, non-work-specific task proficiency, written and oral communication proficiency, management, and administrative supervision and conscientious initiative [61, 62]. Besides that, among eight performance factors [57],

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there are approximately five factors which focus on task For example, these five factors [61,63] performance. comprises management factors such as planning and organizing, guiding, directing and motivating subordinates and providing feedback, training, coaching, developing subordinates and communication effectively and keeping the rest informed. Task performance is associated with an individual's ability and talent to perform based on the organization's objectives [63]. This contribution can be both direct (production workers) or indirect (staff personnel and managers). Activities that are related to task performance differs between works, it is related more towards abilities and finally, it is more towards an in-role attitude of an individual [61]. Hence, teaching and learning performance is more focused on task performance.

Over the last couple of years, special attention has been given towards task performance among researchers. The current study favors [61] two-factor model of work performance consists of the task and contextual performance. In addition to that, contextual performance is considered as the organizational, social and psychological context that serves as the critical catalyst for task activities and processes [61]. Contextual performance is considered to be more into assisting and productive attitude [56, 61].

Furthermore, contextual performance is more into taking the extra effort to accomplish a certain task, carrying out designated task willingly, assisting and helping others, ensuring all the rules and regulations within the organization is followed and lastly, supporting and defending the organizational objectives accordingly. Furthermore, activities that support the organizational, social and psychological environment in terms of the desired organizational goals that are being looked at would be focused on contextual performance as it does not contribute to the technical core [61].

Contextual attitudes that are in support of the environment whereby the function of the technical core are important rather than the technical core itself [61]. Nevertheless, contextual dimensions contribute to the effectiveness of the organization by shaping accordingly. Consequently, the following is being proposed:

**Proposition 3: Social Intelligence positively influences Teaching and Learning Performance** 

## 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

All the propositions mentioned previously are depicted in the framework below:

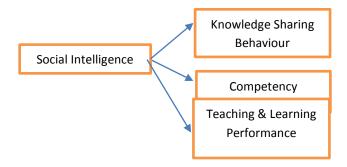


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

# 4. CONCLUSIONS

This research will focus on the influence of social intelligence on knowledge sharing behavior, competency and teaching and learning performance among academicians in Malaysian Private Universities. As there is limited research being conducted in terms of the relationship between (1) social intelligence and knowledge sharing behavior, (2) social intelligence and competency, and (3) social intelligence and teaching and learning performance thus this study is expected to contribute to the body of knowledge pertaining to Malaysian Private Universities.

Furthermore, this research is anticipated to be a good source for the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) on ways to further improve academicians through better human resources policy as well as strengthening the knowledge sharing methods, social intelligence, competency and teaching and learning performance of academicians. In addition to that, this research emphasizes various variables such as (social intelligence, knowledge sharing behavior, competency and teaching, and learning performance) that have not been integrated previously.

Additionally, to date, the research on social intelligence tend to focus on conceptual theorizing without much empirical evidence. Based on the researchers' knowledge, no empirical research has integrated concepts of social intelligence, knowledge sharing behaviour, competency and teaching, and learning performance. Therefore, this study would provide an integrative view of all the concepts.

Other than that, universities today have undergone several transformations due to various reasons which involve cost, the sudden increase in terms of students' numbers, globalization and changes in terms of management style. Additionally, things are moving towards more challenging and drastic business environment whereby developing academicians' skills with the appropriate talent is a concern for universities. Moreover, universities' environment solely depends on how change is accepted, how change can improve their practices and how competitiveness can be increased.

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