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## A Qualitative Study of Knowledge Transfers and Organizational Learning Process

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### **Abstract:**

*This is an inductive study of organizational learning and knowledge transfer within departments of universities to identify an employee's behavior that influences organizational learning and knowledge transfer, and also identify that how it contributes to the organizational learning process. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with HODs and employees of academic and non-academic departments of university. The aim of this study, to propose a model that represents the connection between organizational learning and knowledge transfer and the impact of employees' perception about the culture of the organization which influences knowledge transfer and the organizational learning process. Employee's experience enhances organizational learning (OL) and OL results in knowledge transfer which means that there is an association between OL and knowledge transfer. Organizational learning can be measured by identifying the changes in cognition or behavior of employees related to their working experiences. Working experience of those employees who face task-related challenges and ways to handle the problems efficiently is an outcome of the organizational learning process. It is also explored that knowledge gains from foreign universities impact knowledge transfer to local universities.*

**Key Words:** Employees Behavior, Knowledge Transfer, Organizational Learning.

## **Introduction**

Every individual in life learns from different experiences which enable them to gain knowledge, likewise organizations learn from different experiences to enhance and improve knowledge. The change in knowledge due to different experiences in organizations is known as organizational learning (Namada, 2018). Learning can be direct or indirect; learning from one's own experiences is known as knowledge acquisition and experiences gain indirectly from others is known as knowledge transfer (Argote, 2015). Learning not only enhances knowledge and skills but also helps employees to develop creative skills and increase productivity (Prieto-Pastor & Martin-Perez, 2015). While facing a turbulent environment and acquiring knowledge from outside is often critical (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). In the organizational learning process employee's creative capabilities can be enhanced by explaining, discussing ideas, and updating the existing processes and skills (Easterby-Smith, Lyles, and Tsang 2008).

The purpose of learning, to allow an organization to develop the capability to identify, obtain, integrate, and utilize acquired knowledge to improve internal skills and adapt to external environmental changes (Fraj, Matute, & Melero, 2015; Tsai, Horng, Liu, & Hu, 2015). Learning occurs at different levels in organizations: individual, group, organizational, and inter-organizational levels (Kozlowski, Chao, & Nowakowski, in press). Organizational learning can be measured by identifying the changes in cognition or behavior of employees related to their experiences (Easterby-Smith, Crossan, & Nicolini, 2000). A framework of organizational learning and knowledge is developed by Arogote and Miron-Spektor (2011). According to their framework, the experience of employees is interlinked with organizational context to create knowledge. However, this study intended to explore the relationship between organizational learning and inter-departmental knowledge transfer.

Employee experience can be defined as the performed task of employees in organizations. Further, that experience can be measured by aggregating the number of tasks of employees to estimate the cumulative working experience of employees within the organization. For example, the experience of a consulting organization would be measured by the cumulative number of consulting engagements. Experiences of employees enhance organizational learning and organizational learning results in knowledge, which is retained in the basic elements of members, tools, tasks, and networks. These aspects of knowledge have implications for their storage and transfer.

Knowledge transfer is a process, through which one unit of an organization is influenced by the experience of another (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Research on knowledge transfer analyzes whether organizational units learn directly (Bandura, 1977) or from the experience of other organizational units. For example, Darr, Argote, and Epple (1995) analyzed whether pizza stores learned from experiences within their franchise or from other stores owned by the same franchisee. Several dimensions of the context have been found to affect knowledge transfer i.e. strategy, goals, rewards, technology, system, structure, and culture of an organization (Argote, 2015). The geographic distance, another dimension between organizational units, can also influence knowledge transfer (Argote, Denomme, & Fuchs, 2011). However, the most fundamental characteristic that influences knowledge transfer that whether the contexts of the organizational units involved in the transfer of knowledge are

similar to each other or different from each other. Knowledge is more likely to transfer across inter or intra-organizational contexts (Baum & Berta, 1998; Darr & Kurtzberg, 2000).

Multiunit or diverse portfolio structures always enable knowledge transfer (Argote, Ingram & Simons, 2002). The multiunit or diverse portfolio structures of a single organization provide different opportunities for knowledge transfer such as training, workshops, and different forums to communicate with other units. According to a research study, the relationship between a “supporter” and an “inheritor” organization affects knowledge transfer (Szulanski, 1996). Kane, Argote, and Levine (2005) identify that groups that shared a superordinate (commitment-based) identity through which members felt that they belonged to the same social group were more likely to share knowledge than those lacking a shared social identity. The organization’s structure and practices also affect knowledge transfer. Tsai (2002) analyzes that social interaction across organizational units facilitates knowledge transfer while centralized structures obstruct knowledge transfer. Collins and Smith (2006) determined that commitment-based human resource practices such as group incentives and training were positively related to a climate that included trust, cooperation, and shared language.

It is evident that internal knowledge transfer across organizational units within firms providing competitive benefits (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000; Schulz, 2001). Consequently, for creating competitive advantage, it is important to understand the association between organizational learning and knowledge transfer at inter and intra-organizational level (Wijk, Jansen, & Lyles, 2008), but the focus of this research study is to explore the inter-organizational learning and knowledge transfer within the different units of the same organization. The existing study completing the future call to identify the relationship between organizational learning and knowledge transfer (Argote, 2015). Another future call has been followed from the research study of (Liu, 2018) that the influence of organizational learning and knowledge transfer over the organizational learning process and also their causes and consequences on organizational learning processes. There is an urge to explore the organization learning process and its effects on knowledge transfer because it is highlighted in the literature that organizational learning is a process through which experience performing a task is converted into knowledge, which, in turn, changes the organization and affects its future performance (Argote, Linda, 2021).

### **Statement of Purpose/ Objective**

The purpose of this research study is to explore the influence of knowledge transfer on the organizational learning process and to investigate the impact of employee behavior on knowledge transfer and organizational learning processes. To enhance the organizational performance and innovation, organization need to explore that how does knowledge transfer contribute to the organizational learning process and how employees’ behavior impact knowledge transfer and the organizational learning process does.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Organizational Learning***

Competing in an ever-changing environment requires organizations to learn (North & Kumta, 2014). Organizational learning (OL) is a continuous process through which an organization learns by doing different activities, depends upon the operation of that organization (Ortenblad, 2001). There are many arguments about OL, such as; “organizational learning is individual learning of agents of organization (Argyris and Schon)”, OL is individual learning which directly or indirectly influences the organization (Meza, Lorentea, & Cabrera, 2005), Senge (1990) suggested that OL means organizations having not only the ability of adaptation but also having the capability of “Generativity”, which means the ability to create new knowledge to face the challenges of future, OL is all about “collecting” and “allocating” of knowledge and that knowledge could be understood through different mental models, effective communication system and efficient operating procedures (Ortenblad, 2004). Ultimately knowledge is a result of learning. The capability of an organization that acquires, create, transfer and integrate the knowledge to change the behavior and improve the performance of employees (Meza, Lorentea, & Cabrera, 2005).

According to Werner, Dickson, and Hyde (2015), OL is a central tendency of an organization to respond to environmental changes and develop a capacity for knowledge transfer. It is argued by (Argyris and Schon, 1987) that OL means the individuals learn by detecting their own mistakes and often take effective actions to correct them (Liaoa, Feib, & Liu, 2008). Organizations learn by experiencing different activities that result in knowledge creation and that knowledge could be transfer efficiently if the members or employees of the organization having the trust to share knowledge. Trustworthiness encourages employees to transfer knowledge which strengthens the relationship among employees and the organization to overcome problems, improve skills, and increase the employees learning capability within the system of the organization.

Three main dimensions influence OL capability, first employees experience, second Organizational context, and third is knowledge transfer (Argote, 2015). A framework of organizational learning and knowledge transfer is developed by Arogote and Miron-Spektor (2011). According to that framework, the experience of employees is interlinked with organizational context to create knowledge but the intention of the study, to explore the association between organizational learning and knowledge transfer in inter-departmental units of the university.

### ***Employee's experience***

Employee's experience can be defined as the number of tasks performed by the employee and the cumulative working experience of employees within an organization can be estimated by aggregating the number of tasks of employees. The experience of employees enhances organizational learning (OL) and organizational learning results in knowledge creation. It is argued by Garvin (1993) that OL means “an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying the behavior of employees to reflect new knowledge and insights”. It means OL can be measured through employee's experience and those experiences are associated with the cognition or behavior of employees (Easterby-Smith and Nicolini, 2000).

According to Linda, OL is a function of an employee's experience (Argote, 2015) and the experience of employees associated with behavior that is interlinked with organizational context. Organizational learning facilitates performance improvement and that improved performance becomes a part of the experience of employees (Bunderson and Sutcliffe, 2003). When an organization's employees have autonomy of utilization of resources it creates a culture of experimentation that leads organizations towards learning and knowledge creation (Wiersma, 2007). OL is a function of employee experimentation but those experimentations are processed within the context of the organization to create knowledge.

### ***Organizational context***

Organizational context means the process and practices within the system of the organization to enhance the learning in the organization. Learning perspective means organization support learning at all levels in organizations; individuals, groups/teams, and departments. The OL can only be enhanced when an organization facilitates the learning for every employee at all levels and continuously acquire and transfer knowledge to meet future challenges and adopt changes (Yang, Watkins, & Marsick, 2004; Namada, 2018). In the organizational context, two main aspects are performing a pivotal role in creating an OL environment, employees' skills and experience that are required to accomplish a task, and organizational support to enhance the ability of employees through process, practices, policies, structure, technology and reward system of organization.

Organizational context means the configuration of linkages and relationships within the system of an organization. Relations enable individuals in the organization to approach the focal person for sharing an idea, resource, and useful knowledge which increases the chances for authentic organizational knowledge transfer (Reagans and McEvily, 2003).

Several studies represent networking and sharing of ideas and knowledge inside the organizational units and outside the organization increase the chances for relevant knowledge accessed (Argote, 2015). It is the organizational structure that facilitates the relation or networking to enhance the information processing capacity which turns results in knowledge transfer (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000). It is evident from research studies that strong networking among units of organization leads to greater knowledge transfer (Reagans and McEvily, 2003; Rowley et al., 2000).

Moreover, previous studies suggested that trust between employees also determines organizational knowledge transfer. Knowledge could be transfer efficiently if the members or employees of the organization having the trust to share knowledge. Trustworthiness encourages employees to transfer knowledge which strengthens the relationship among employees and the organization to overcome problems, improve skills, and increase the employees learning capability within the system of the organization.

### ***Knowledge Transfer***

The change in knowledge owing to different experiences in organizations is known as organizational learning. Learning from own experiences is known as knowledge acquisition but experiences gain indirectly from others are known as knowledge transfer (Argote, 2015). Knowledge transfer within the frame of organizational learning is positively apprehended with performance and innovation. Organizational knowledge transfer is a process in which the agents

of organizations; individuals, groups/teams, and departments, communicate to exchange information and are influenced by the experience and knowledge of other units/departments of the organization (Argote, 2000). It is evident from some research studies that knowledge transfer across different organizations is more complicated as compared to transferring knowledge between units/departments within the organization (Inkpen and Tsang, 2005).

However, the process of knowledge transfer could efficiently enhance the performance and can bring innovation in the system only when organizations have absorptive capacity. Absorptive capacity means the organization can identify, integrate, and implement new knowledge. Absorptive capacity facilitates inter-organizational knowledge transfer. Besides, many empirical research studies have discovered that absorptive capacity contributes to the amount of knowledge learned across units within an organization (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000; Szulanski, 1996). Consequently, for creating competitive advantage it is important to understand the relationship between organizational learning and knowledge transfer at inter and intra-organizational level (Wijk, Jansen, & Lyles, 2008), but the focus of this research study is just to explore the inter-organizational learning and knowledge transfer within the different units/departments of the university

### **Methodology and Philosophical Position**

This research paper is inductive with the aim of proposed a model that represents the association between knowledge transfer and the organizational learning process. The constructivist paradigm and interpretative methodology are employed to elaborate the close approach with participants. It identifies the reality of the world and transactional epistemology with a subjective approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

### **Data Collection**

This study is qualitative and data has been gathered by conducting semi-structured interviews. According to Potter (2002) interview technique is an efficient way to get in-depth information about the reality and lived experience of participants in naturally occurring data from the field rather than asking participants to comment on it (Silverman, 2014).

The data has been collected from employees of both academic and non-academic departments of the university. There are a total of five academic departments (Business, Engineering, Education, Computer Science, and Mathematics) and four non-academic departments (Finance, HRM, Procurement, Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC)). Data were collected from the head of department (HODs) and employees of all departments (academic and non-academic) of the university to explore the relationship between knowledge transfer and the organizational learning process at the inter-departmental level at the university. HODs and employees of academic and non-academic departments having experience of a maximum of 15 to 20 years and minimum experience of 2 to 3 years and most of them were associate professors, professors, and assistant professors and qualified their degree from UK, USA, Malaysia, Turkey, Agha Khan University Karachi and NUML Islamabad.

Semi-structured interviews were based on three main dimensions, first employees' experience in which interviewers asked about their

experimentation and innovation in their working activities i.e. does this university promote experimentation and innovation as a way of improving the work process? Second Organizational Context in which the interviewee asked about the university’s policies and procedures i.e. how innovative ideas that work are rewarded at this university? The third dimension about knowledge transfer and integration, interviewee asked about knowledge transfer, i.e., how working with different individuals at different levels enhance the knowledge transfer?

The 19 interviews were conducted by considering the theoretical saturation while conducting the interviews with participants (Miles and Hubermann, 1994). According to (Yilmaz, 2013) specifically small sample and open-ended questions provide an open-door facility to responded to express their feelings, thoughts, emotions, and their perception at their person-level and facilitate the researcher in-depth information about the issue affecting the social behaviors. All interviews were audio-recorded after getting consent from the interviewee to maintain the record, reliability, and respondent validity for this study. The audio-recorded interview was then transcribed into text form for further data analyses.

According to Gioia (2012) in first-order data analysis, categories were distilled and differentiate among similar and different categories (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012). In second-order data analysis, themes were built from relevant categories that answer the important question (Gioia, 2012). Once we had workable themes and concepts in hand then the process of concept development emerged. In third-order data analyses an “ aggregate dimension” of the study is explored and then we further proceed to a data structure (Gioia et.al, 2012). According to Robert Stake, categorical aggregation is a direct interpretation and a technique of data analysis (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

**Table 1 Data Structure**

First-order code	Theoretical categories	Aggregated theoretical dimensions
At a departmental level, we had always discussions on new ideas and we do implement those ideas. Management support innovation and encourages the betterment of the organization to bring new practices The vision of leadership is actually to bring more and more innovation. I believe in the concept of life-long learning.	Focus is an Innovative idea  Experimentation and learning	Organizational Learning

<p>Yes, He involves us in decision-making. Key people are involved in the decision-making process.                  Yes, I do because my leadership style is more like shared leadership.                  As an investment, because that investment is long-term and can benefit our nation.                  Definitely if we learn means our institute learns too                  Done my master's and Ph.D. subsidized by the university.                  It's a verbal appreciation but not in monetary terms                  I have no power to reward anybody in terms of a certificate or terms of finance. Management does reward but in terms of verbal appreciation.</p>	<p>Culture of Empowerment                   Employees Learning                   Rewards and recognition</p>	<p>Organizational structure, Policies, and Practices</p>
<p>IT and business departments are interconnected (i.e. BlockChain implementation)                  Departments are getting independent                  It is just like a joint venture because all departments have their importance                  Work together in conferences, maths Olympiad, and other events.</p>	<p>Interconnectivity is event/activities Based</p>	<p>Inter-departmental linkage</p>
<p>Open system to discuss and suggest the targets                  Errors and failures are critically observed and analyzed.                  Errors and failures are discussed in meetings.</p>	<p>Knowledge about errors and failures</p>	<p>System of evaluation</p>
<p>My attitude towards my work, idea, study, research, innovation was different from what I'm doing here.                  Our working style and attitude both have been changed.</p>	<p>Attitude toward work</p>	<p>Experience changes working style</p>
<p>A successful person is that who learns from others' experiences.                  Employees are encouraged to transfer the knowledge                  We interact with different individuals here and we learn                  Transfers of knowledge is a better source of learning                  Employees get knowledge through presentations, experience, and training</p>	<p>Sources of gain and transfers of knowledge</p>	<p>Knowledge Transfer</p>

**Data Analysis**

The interpretative approach has been used to analyze the close attached feedback from respondents. The findings of all 19 interviews are presented in P-ISSN-2415-5284 e-ISSN-2522-3291 © 2021 Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur- All rights reserved. Vol. 7 | 2021

table 1 respectively. Data analysis involves all three stages; first-order data, second-order data, and aggregated dimensions. This study is based on three main dimensions; employee experience, organizational context, and knowledge transfer. In the first dimension, the head of departments (HODs) and employees were asked about their learning and empowerment at university. Opinions, suggestions, and innovative ideas given internally by employees, teams, stakeholders, and externally by affiliated universities, consulting firms are critically observed and analyzed then implemented considering all other factors such as availability of resources, cultural, technological, and geographical location of the university. Implementing those suggested ideas create knowledge and a culture of learning which enhances organizational learning.

*Well, generally say this university following the best practices of top universities at the national and international level* (1. Respondent response)

*We study best practices at the departmental level and we try to implement them.* (2. Respondent response).

In the second dimension, HODs and employees were asked about the organizational policies, procedures, and practices within the university. Organizational policies, procedures, and practices regarding the involvement in decision making, awarding rewards to employees, awareness of objectives, or updated information about new policies and practices were asked. Furthermore, they were enquired about inter-departmental connectivity within the university, which is the main focus of this study. HODs and employees belong to the academic department are told that in weakly or in monthly meetings our immediate bosses ask or take our suggestions in any specific decision. This means management or higher authorities involve their employees in the decision-making process. The perception of non-academic employees is a contrast to academic employees specifically QEC. They said that we are here to support our higher authorities whatever decision taken by them.

*My leadership style is more like shared leadership so I do involve my team in decision making.*

(3. Respondent response).

*Decision-making is the discretion of the top management level, we are here to support them.*

(4. Respondent response).

To evaluate the organizational context through the practices of the university, employees were asked about their rewards such as; financial, certification, or verbal appreciation. Most of the HODs said it is not in our authority to award employees with any financial or certification reward but verbal appreciation is always there. Few HODs said that there is a financial reward from top management and reward is given to those employees who contribute something in scholarly work in social science in any impact factor journal. Employees said that we always have a verbal appreciation and few employees are awarded a certificate of the best employee of the year. The university has a culture of empowerment and top management give reward and recognition to their employees.

*First of all, I have no power to reward anybody in terms of a certificate or terms of finance.*

(5. Respondent response).

*We do appreciate and our employees are rewarded. For example, for their research output, someone contributing to the scholarly journal they are highly paid financially rewards.*

(6. Respondent response).

In the organizational context HODs and employees were further asked for updated information about new practices and new methodologies implemented such as; installing or introducing new software. They said the university arranges different types of meetings, training and sends emails to provide sufficient information to every individual about new practices within the system of the university.

*If new things have been introduced and the system has been updated then it is communicated among employees and they are also encouraged for adopting those practices.*

(7. Respondent response)

Inter-departmental connectivity is the main focus of this study which enables different departments to transfer knowledge and create an environment of organizational learning. In this regard HODs and employees of academic and non-academic departments have different opinions. Few said that academically for arranging any specific events such as; International Conference, Math's Olympia we remain connected. The business and computer department are currently introducing a new subject i.e. "Block Chain" with the collaboration of the business and computer science department. Another program is in the process of an establishment to keep on the modern trends the "Islamic Finance". Whereas the non-academic department perceives that there is connectivity in departments but they are not working systematically. Few employees said that this university moving toward the growth phase which causes every department to work independently.

*They are interconnected for example "blockchain" we are going to launch a program in which the IT and Business department will work together.* (8. Respondent response).

*Things are going haphazardly personally I have observed. I have not found any systematic way in any other department.* (9. Respondent response).

*As the university grew the boundaries are established and we are tearing apart and departments are getting independent they are having their initiatives.* (10. Respondent Response)

In the third dimension, HODs and employees were enquired about knowledge transfer in which they were asked about the system of evaluation of errors and failures, an experience that has changed their working style and knowledge transfer. Errors and failures are discussed in different meetings on different events and transfers of knowledge at different forums and training. HODs and employees told that errors and failures are discussed and possible improvements are also discussed to overcome the issues in the future and they said mistakes and failures are part of the learning process.

Experiences have a great impact on the attitude, behavior of an employee which makes the personality of a working individual. Employees shared their understanding, perception, and experiences that have changed their working style and way of dealing with several activities in the organizational learning process. Knowledge transfer is a capability in which working individuals learn from others' experiences and their success stories. There are various sources

of knowledge transfer such as, academic events, conferences, gathering in a national and international forum, and training.

*Mistakes/errors are discussed and he encourages us and advises or suggeststo us how to remove those errors and improve.* (11. Respondent response).

*The more you have experienced the more you learn the techniques.* (12. Respondent response).

*Yes, of course in thearea of knowledge acquisition we learn from our mistakes, from juniors, seniors, community, and from teamwork learn we also learn from the previous precedent as a knowledge transfer.* (13. Respondent response).

## **Discussion**

The motive of the study is to explore the association between knowledge transfer andthe organizational learning process (OL) and also to investigate how employee behavior influences knowledge transfer andthe organizational learning process. The change in knowledge due to different experiences in an organization is known as organizational learning. Organizational learning depends upon the capability of an organization to process knowledge, which means it is the capability of an organization that acquires, create, transfer and integrate the knowledge to change the behavior and improve the performance of employees (Meza, Lorentea, & Cabrera, 2005).

There could be different dimensions that impact the relationship between OL and knowledge transfer such as; legitimacy, diversified workforce, culture, etc. (Karlsen & Gottschalk, 2015) but in this study, only three dimensions have been considered (Employee's experience, Organizational context, and Knowledge transfer). Employees' experimentation and innovative ideas for the accomplishment of any task or assignment were encouraged by HODs and top management. Innovative ideas and suggestions were not even taken internally but practices of national and international universities were also observed and implemented keeping in view the suitability of the university's environment. While conducting this study we came to know about some of the hidden factors, i.e., employees were enquired about their workload if they had sufficient time to meet with colleagues or employees of other departments for sharing of new work or research-related ideas. They said that they are working more than 9 to 10 hours/day which create hindrances for sharing creative ideas or employees having fear of sharing ideas with their HODs because ultimately, they had to accomplish that new idea which means more working responsibilities, more working load, and more hours to work. HODs of all academic and non-academic departments empower their employees to participate in decision-making. Employees at university were motivated under the leadership of their higher authorities which helps employees to learn more in every consecutive period of their working experience. Employees were rewarded with a verbal appreciation for their routine tasks but rewarded annually with a certificate based on their performance, i.e., the best employee of the year. Employees were also rewarded financially for scholarly contributions in any impact factor journal.

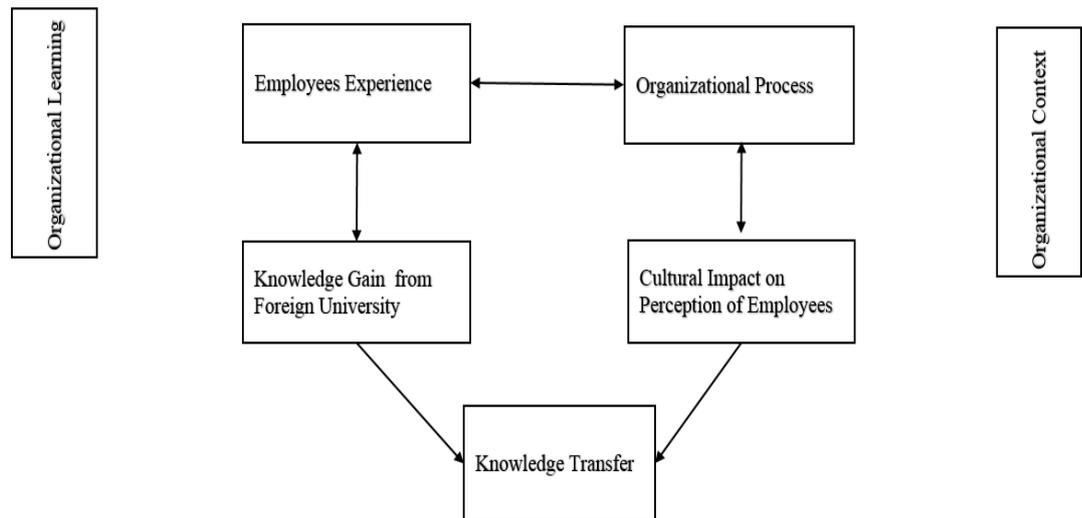
Employees were kept updated with sufficient information about the new procedure, policies, and practices in different meetings on different events and through emails. Employees have been sent to different forums, conferences and different training to effectively and efficiently introduced or implement

those practices which create a culture of organizational learning and also enhance absorptive capacity in the learning process. A question arises here, is the gained knowledge and learning at different forums, and conferences, transferred efficiently? Knowledge transfer within the frame of organizational learning is positively apprehended with performance and innovation. Organizational knowledge transfer is a process in which the agents of the organization; individuals, groups/teams, and departments, communicate to exchange information and be influenced by the experience and knowledge of other units/departments of the organization (Argote, 2000). HODs and employees who had qualified for their degrees from any foreign university and experience the culture of foreign universities perceived that they had faced the principal of conflict, for such employees when they came back and offer their services at local universities. It impedes efficient and effective knowledge transfer.

Failures and errors are discussed at the departmental level and possible solutions are also suggested to overcome those errors and failures. HODs and employees' working experience has changed their working style and attitude towards dealing with several tasks and people. They perceived that at the early period of their job they had become impatient: they perceived everything as going in the wrong direction. They explained that the system of the university was not working properly, however slowly and gradually they came to realize that the organizational process works differently in practices that demand to be adoptive of contextual factors. However, HODs and employees perceived that teamwork and training were a good source of knowledge transfer. Conversely, HODs of academic departments said that for knowledge transfer they needed attitude and sense of realization, and reflection for creating, sharing, transferring knowledge to build an OL process. The whole discussion of this research study is presented in figure 1. It illustrates the relationship between OL and knowledge transfer is interlinked between employees' experience and organizational process. Which further interlinked with the knowledge of employees gained from foreign universities and the organizational process is interlinked with the culture of the organization which impacts on the perception of employees and resultantly the whole process led to knowledge transfer within the context of an organization.

FIGURE:1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OL AND KNOWLEDGE

## TRANSFER



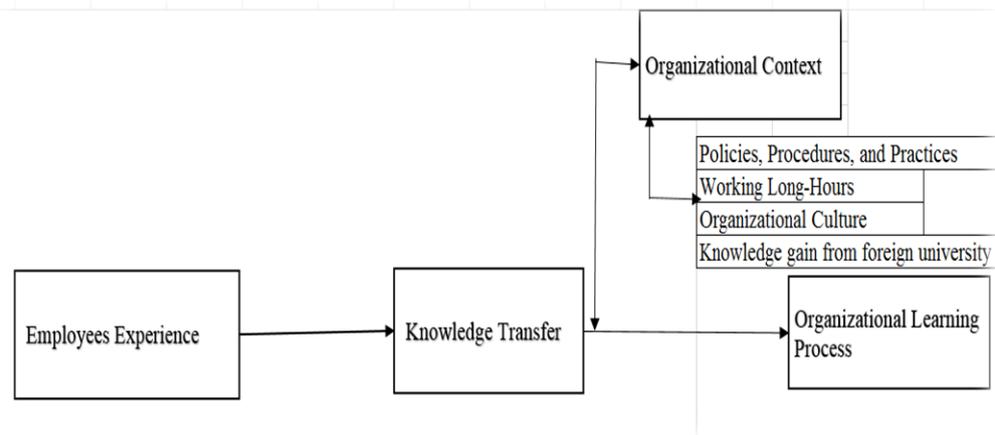
According to Linda (2015), OL is a function of an employee's experience. It means OL can be measured through employee's experience and those experiences are associated with the cognition or behavior of employees (Easterby-Smith and Nicolini, 2000). Employees' working experience causes them to face organizational situations and handle problems efficiently. Few factors influence the employee's experience, i.e., the number of hours employees work and knowledge gain from foreign universities which resultantly impact the knowledge transfer and organizational learning process.

*Proposition 1: Employees' experience and knowledge gain from foreign universities are interlinked and impact the knowledge transfer.*

The OL can only be enhanced when an organization facilitates the learning of its all employees and continuously acquire and transfer knowledge to meet future challenges and adopt changes (Yang, Watkins, & Marsick, 2004). The organizational procedure, policies, and practices are part of organizational culture which also impacts the perception of working individuals. Culture of an organization influence the behavior of employees, which is the center for knowledge creation, sharing, and transfer. Employees demand which knowledge should exchange and control and which relationship individuals have within the structure of an organization to transfer knowledge and to enhance the OL process. Culture particularly affects the transfer of knowledge (Karlsen & Gottschalk, 2015) and the OL process.

*Proposition 2: Organizational process and perception of employees about organizational culture are interlinked which impacts knowledge transfer.*

## Proposed Model of study



### Conclusion

This study was conducted in university and the focus of the study is inter-departmental knowledge transfer and its influence on the organizational learning process. There were five academic and four non-academic departments which constitute inter-departmental connections within the university. In University, employee experience enhances organizational learning (OL), and OL results in knowledge transfer which means that there is an association between OL and knowledge transfer.

The employee's experience can be measured by the accomplishment of the number of tasks. Employees working for long hours to manage their tasks, influence productivity, and knowledge sharing (Collewet & Sauermann, 2017). It is highlighted in the literature that organizational learning is important for survival and long-term performance (Abu-Shanab, E., Knight, M. B., & Haddad, M. 2014). The culture of an organization is another important factor that affects the knowledge transfer and organizational learning process. The knowledge that he/she has gained in the period of academic education from foreign universities has an impact on the knowledge transfer due to the culture, policies, procedures, and practices of the organization.

The perception of employees about the culture of the university has also impact knowledge transfer because the employees who got qualifications from foreign universities perceive that those practices of foreign universities certainly are not implemented which results in an impact on knowledge transfer at local universities. The relation between OL and knowledge could be strongly enhanced if management considers that in university different projects and programs should be introduced to enhance the inter-departmental connectivity among all five departments at the university to enhance the knowledge transfer and organizational learning process which could provide a competitive edge to the local regional universities. Organizational learning can be enhanced by knowledge transfer and sharing (Kim, E. J., & Park, S. 2020). Management should also focus on cultural change to bring innovation and transfer the knowledge gain to acquire a competitive edge. According to Tsai (2002) conclude that the organizational unit and inter-units are the central positions for innovation and learning by having access to knowledge transfer (Argote, 2021).

### Limitations and future direction

This study investigated the qualitative relationship between knowledge transfer and organizational learning process; future study can be done on an empirical investigation of the proposed model. The focus of the study was a single university with inter-departmental level knowledge transfer future studies can include the number of campuses of single universities to check inter and intra-level knowledge transfer and their impact on the organizational learning process.

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