

The Role of IT Usage in Mediating the Relationship between Knowledge Sharing and Academics Performance

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between knowledge sharing and academic performance in the context of quality-assurance related work. It furthermore aims to explore the role of information technology in mediating this relationship. Quantitative method was applied to collect data from the participants using an online-based questionnaire. Convenience sampling technique was used. The responses were collected from 140 participants in a university from Saudi Arabia. The study found a strong positive relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance. It was also found out that information technology partially mediates the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance. The research unearths the significant contribution made by information technology in mediating the relationship between individual-level knowledge sharing and the individual performance. This helps to understand the positive impacts on individual work performance in institutions of higher education that would be derived if individuals use various forms of IT to share knowledge. The focus of the research is the individual performance as the pertinent contribution towards positive outcomes in institutional performance.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Information Technology, Higher Education, Quality Work, Academics, Performance

I . Introduction

Knowledge sharing is at the very core of excellence in individual performance of academics, and only more so when they are engaged in quality-related works. Given the magnitude and diversity of works that are related to quality assurance activities and

processes, it becomes all the more pertinent to share and partake in knowledge and expertise of each other in any academic setup. However, according to Mittal and Dhar (2015) facilitating and enhancing the process of knowledge sharing is a critical challenge for most public sector organizations. Institutions of higher education have also experienced numerous chal-

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lenges in establishing the best approach to knowledge sharing and it has been identified that using Information Technology (IT) to facilitate knowledge sharing provides private and public institutions with sustainable competitive advantage Masa'deh et al. (2017)

In the backdrop of a large university, in Saudi Arabia, with about 70 programs, more than 50000 students, and some 3,500 faculty members, the canvass of quality assurance and academic development only writ large. Quality related activities are best carried out when performed in a cyclic-loop. Beginning with a modest environmental scan or situational analysis, culminating into the development of its strategic plan, to the ground level practices in teaching and learning form the essential spokes of this cyclic loop, each one of which cannot be accomplished meaningfully without a comprehensive knowledge sharing at all levels. Since the very essence of quality related works lie in the continuity of things and not in completion as such, knowledge sharing amongst academics becomes indispensable. Here, we endeavor to investigate this indelible relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance among academics in quality related works.

Quality related works broadly refer to an ever-evolving pursuit of excellence throughout the academic and quasi setup that a university represents. From the development and implementation of strategic plan to the everyday compliance with the set best practices, of any accreditation agency for that matter, in impacting all aspects of teaching and learning at the university, to a periodic stopover at self-studies, all fall in the realm of quality assurance. Therefore, it demands great patience, sense of cooperation, and an enhanced awareness of the whole system from all those involved.

To keep oneself updated throughout requires a

great deal of knowledge sharing, and it is equally significant when it comes to the high improbability of 'one knowing all'. Continuous professional development programs, debates and discussions via different media platforms, working groups, etc., are some of the ways to facilitate this knowledge sharing on a regular basis. Benefiting from each other's knowledge and wisdom has never been out of fashion. Knowledge sharing is a necessary tool by which academics can enhance their individual performance while dispensing quality related assignments.

This study aims at generating deep insights into the knowledge sharing process in academics and how the factors that influence individual's academic performance is perceived. Particularly, the research objective is to answer the following questions:

- To what extent knowledge sharing positively influence the individual Performance among academics performing quality related activities?
- To what extent IT usage is mediating the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual Performance among academics performing quality related activities?

This research contributes to both theory and practice. In terms of theoretical contribution, individual performance forms the micro foundation of organisational performance. Thus, it is crucial to examine the relationship between knowledge sharing and academics performance. The study furthermore assesses the significance of information technology as an important factor that enhances the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance, in order to strengthen the overall organisational performances.

On the practical side, this research is an attempt to fill the gap of limited research on KM in Saudi

Arabia context, in general, and in the academics field in particular. By understanding such relationships between the research elements, decision makers can enhance the circumstances that facilitate knowledge sharing in order to improve academic performance. In addition, universities top management can invest in IT technology to promote and facilitate knowledge sharing.

II. Literature Review

2.1. Knowledge Sharing:

One of the greatest assets that people have is the possession of knowledge that can be converted to innovative capabilities. Calantone et al. (2002) assert that Knowledge is a key success factor for any organisation. According to Ritala et al. (2015) knowledge sharing is defined as all the activities that are concerned in distributing, or transferring knowledge from one person/group to another. Knowledge brings great benefits and enhance individual's creativity if shared appropriately (Ainin et al., 2015).

Schechner (2017) affirms that sharing information with other people assists to provide important ideas as well as know-how on ways that can benefit others and cooperate to innovate ideas and solve existing challenges and problems. Knowledge sharing creates intellectual capital among various individuals. Knowledge sharing requires the collaboration of two or more people in order to gain mutual benefits. Majid and Panchapakesan (2015) states that the best challenge in an academic environment is nurturing the habit of knowledge sharing. This is because; integrating knowledge sharing in an academic environment facilitates collaborative efforts that are vital towards enhancing productivity.

Wang et al. (2014) posits that Knowledge sharing consists of two main facets, which are the propensity to share knowledge and the knowledge sharing behaviour. The propensity to share knowledge comprises of the positive attitude the individual holds to sharing knowledge, self-efficacy, as well as the perceived benefits of sharing knowledge. These factors guide the extent to which individuals would be willing and ready to share knowledge. The perceived benefits become a motivating factor for individuals since they are aware that certain profits may accrue if they engage in knowledge sharing practices. Individuals are more likely to lose interest in sharing knowledge if they tend to feel that there are no positive benefits that can be accumulated or returned to them.

Knowledge sharing is viewed as one of the major characteristics of successful organisations. Quality information is more emphasised in governmental as opposed in non-governmental organisations. However, there are better performances in non-governmental organisations due to greater knowledge sharing activities as compared to governmental organisations. According to Vong and Ciganek (2016), knowledge sharing forms one of the great components of improved performances.

2.2. Knowledge Sharing in Higher Education Institutions

Institutional culture, policies and infrastructure can serve as enablers or distractors of the knowledge sharing process. The effectiveness of this process can also relate to the accessibility and the efficiency of assistive technology that facilitate communication between various players in the education sector. The process of sharing knowledge refers to moving knowl-

edge between individuals from different departments and hierarchical orders. The main objective of knowledge sharing among professionals in an academic setup is to transfer knowledge and from highly experienced sources to those who need it (Koles et al., 2010). Knowledge sharing provides experts with an opportunity to collectively spread their knowledge to a wider academic fraternity thus leading to better utilization of the existing knowledge and creation of new knowledge.

The primary issue in knowledge management from the perspective of academics is to ensure that information and knowledge is obtained, organized and distributed to where it is much needed (Wang and Noe, 2010). The knowledge sharing procedure can either occur openly through direct consultative statements or indirectly without the recipient being able to express the knowledge acquired (Koles et al., 2010). Therefore, knowledge sharing at the university is an important approach that enhances competitive advantage amongst academics. According to Von Stumm et al. (2011), the process of inspiring knowledge distribution is the most significant aspect consciously encouraging knowledge management in different departments of the university.

In terms of individual performance can be conceptualised from various perspectives. A study carried out by Abdullah (2017) identified five major dimensions of individual performance. These are job roles and responsibilities, communication in teamwork, speed of completing tasks, innovation, and job satisfaction. Individual performance measures the significance of a person in an organisation. It also measures the capacity or the capability of an individual.

Zhu (2012) postulates that individuals with higher propensity of sharing knowledge are more likely to perform than those who do not have the propensity.

The urge to share information leads to the actual behaviour and consequently, increased performance. Employees with greater propensity to sharing knowledge usually realize when they are doing the act itself. The results of their behaviours are usually reflected in their individual performances.

2.3. Information Technology Usage and Knowledge Sharing

IT usage in education institutions refers to the acquisition, synthesis, storage, and sharing of information using the right technology-based assets for communication and computing. IT usage plays a key role in knowledge management processes especially in knowledge sharing. In the education sector, it has been used to assist in the sharing of information, acquisition, as well as storage. Through using IT to assess, combine, transfer and store information, IT plays a vital role of enhancing performance in education institutions. Chin Wei and Yeganeh (2013) identified seven elements in which IT can be categorised into. These are: IT tools, IT support, IT skill, IT infrastructure, IT accessibility, IT technology, IT investments.

IT tools refer to the hardware and software that can be used as a connecting factor between individuals to use concepts such as emails, internet, and video-conferencing among others to store and share information (Borghoff and Pareschi, 1997). IT Technology refers to the infrastructure that has been installed to facilitate increased speed in the transfer of information or sharing of knowledge (Rasli and Maseri, 2008). IT supports refers to the kind of infrastructure that enables individuals to access the necessary information at a particular time (Gold et al., 2001). IT skill is concerned with the capability or the ability of human skills to manipulate the IT to

be able to offer unique services to the institution or organisation (Rasli and Maseri, 2008). IT infrastructure is a variety of instruments that can effectively be used to acquire, manage and store information for use within an organisation (Borghoff and Pareschi, 1997). IT investments refers to the value of resources both financial and non-financial that are used to install IT (Rasli and Maseri, 2008). IT accessibility refers to the presence of IT experts and proper systems present to be used by employees at a particular time (Azari, 2008). The IT can be used to develop new knowledge.

Past research have been able to find out if IT has any effects on the individual performances. Mittal and Dhar (2015) identified that IT improves people's creativity and innovation and consequently, their performances. IT can be able to support various individuals to share information with other people in various departments or sections of academics, and this further increases knowledge sharing (Wang et al., 2014). In such a case, IT can be seen as a facilitator of knowledge sharing; a factor that forms the spring-board for innovativeness and consequently good performances among various individuals.

The lecturers and the employees directly involved in teaching students in higher institutions of learning are expected to come up with processes that aid not only their success but the success of organisations. Learning involves the sharing of information between the teacher and the student. In many cases, the teach-

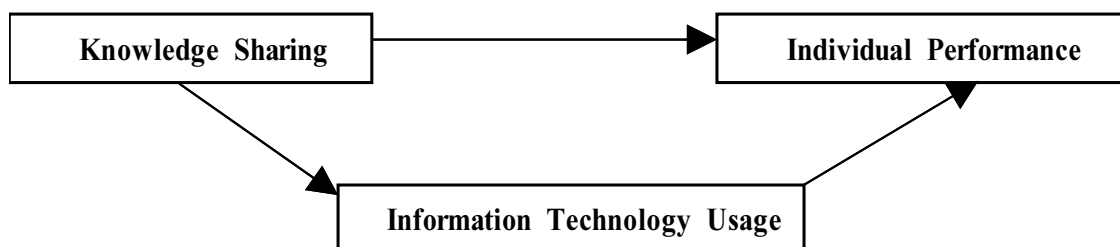
ers or lecturers have to depend on other factors to be able to disseminate the knowledge to the students. The use of IT has been assessed to be one of the key issues that facilitate knowledge sharing and ultimately, individual performance (Domingo and Garganté, 2016).

III. Research Model and Hypotheses

The present research seeks to investigate the role of IT in mediating the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance. The model for the study can be as represented below.

3.1. Knowledge Sharing

According to Bock et al. (2010), knowledge sharing is a voluntary process through which knowledge is transferred from one person/group to another, involving the willingness to assist others. Al-Husseini and Elbeltagi (2015) posits that knowledge sharing is one of the aspects considered significant assets for the success of every individual. Knowledge sharing is usually affected by factors such as the beliefs and attitudes of a person, the perception of self-efficacy and the perceived benefits accrued after sharing knowledge (Oostervink et al., 2016). Abu-Shanab et al. (2014) study identified a positive correlation between an individual propensity to share knowledge



<Figure 1> Research Model

and the performance of organisations they work in. In addition, Tseng and Kuo (2014), found out that the individuals actualised knowledge sharing behaviour is related to the organisational performance. Knowledge sharing processes heavily depend on IT usage for distribution of knowledge especially where individuals involved in information sharing are limited by geographical constrains. Knowledge sharing also facilitates the installation of IT systems in order to assist individuals to perform better in institutions. This leads to the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance among academics performing quality assurance-related activities.

3.2. Individual Performance

According to Mone and London (2018), individual performance can be measured from various perspectives. These include: Job performance, career performance, innovator performance, team performance and organisational performance. Jain and Moreno (2015), affirm that for an organisation to perform, individuals must perform. Therefore, the performance of individuals is a crucial factor towards the performance of any give organisation. Bin (2015) states that employees are more engaged in organizational activities such as knowledge sharing if they perceive it as beneficial job performances and consequently, job satisfaction. Masa'deh et al. (2016) view the work of management as supporting employees in processes of knowledge management as they contribute towards work performances. When academics reach their full potential, they attain their desired objectives and accordingly, assist the organizations to attain their outcomes (Zettler and Lang, 2015).

As an innovator, academics are supported by IT and resources to attain the desired outcomes. Knowledge sharing can be facilitated by use of technology (Wihler et al., 2017). Various research have delved into knowledge sharing as an important element for organisations, and others have considered individual performance as the key foundation for organisational performance. In addition, there is no enough previous research that assessed the contributions of IT usage in mediating the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance. The aforementioned discussion leads to the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H2: IT usage positively mediates on the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance.

3.3. Information Technology Usage

IT assists to access, manage and store knowledge for academics (Kumar et al., 2016). Technology can also be utilized to share information from one point to another regardless of the geographical differences (Chin and Yeganeh, 2013). Research carried out by Islam et al. (2015) identified technology as an influential factor supporting of learning activities. The presence of technology in the society and increased globalization, individuals can be able to use facilities such as the internet to share information.

Information technology plays a pertinent role in organizations. However, there are many organizations that usually struggle in implementing the IT infrastructure to support employees to deliver the desired objectives. Individuals in institutions of learning need to get the right information when they need it. The right information is usually utilized to solve problems as well as providing the rightful value for the innumerable domains. A new generation of

information technology systems may be required to unearth the complex problems and challenges that arise in the contemporary society. The complex systems will ultimately be used to ensure that knowledge sharing processes are effectually facilitated. Previous researches have viewed information technology as a pertinent concept that augments knowledge sharing. However, few researches have come up with the impacts of knowledge sharing on information technology. It is claimed that the willingness and desire of individual to share knowledge will encourage them to find suitable way that facilitate such sharing. This explains the logic of assuming the influence of knowledge sharing on IT usage. Based on the foregoing concepts, the research formulates the following hypothesis:

H3: Knowledge sharing impacts positively on IT usage among academics performing quality - assurance related activities.

IV. Research Method

The study used quantitative research approach. A web-based questionnaire was designed with several sections such as the profile of the respondents. The study seeks to test the hypothesis developed. A survey was prepared with a total of 19 items, which were used to take measurements for three different variables: Knowledge Sharing (7 items), Individual Performance (7 items) and IT (5 items). The survey was adopted from the different studies such as Henttonen et al. (2016), Jain and Moreno (2015) and Islam et al. (2015). However, few amendments were made on the survey to satisfy the needs of the current study. A sample survey of 140 academicians was done in a higher institution of learning

located within Saudi Arabia. The information targeted to gather varieties of information regarding job requirements and the factors that facilitate offering of quality services. Convenience sampling technique was used and the questionnaire was sent to the participants using an online Google form.

4.1. Data Analysis

Although there were 1800 targeted participants, only 140 participants' responses were received. Therefore, the response rate was at 7.7%. Data analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS software, version 21. The table below shows a summary of the results for the demographic information of the participants.

4.2. Scale Reliability

The data was analysed to check the level of reliability. Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient was used to determine the reliability level. A coefficient value of between 0.70 and 0.90 is suitable for the analysis. Therefore, the current research will use a minimum alpha coefficient value of 0.80 to determine if some variables will be deleted or not. The analysis for the Cronbach's alpha, as shown below, confirm that the scale reliability is within the accepted range.

4.3. Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

Principal component analysis for the data was carried out. The following shows the output showing the KMO's measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity.

From the table above, the KMO's value is 0.965. The value shows that the sample used is adequate. From the significance column, the p -value is 0.000. This value is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis that

<Table 1> Participants Profile

| Category | Category Frequency | | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|------------|
| Gender | Male | 58 | 41.4% |
| | Female | 82 | 58.6% |
| Academic Degree | Professor | 7 | 5% |
| | Assistant Professor | 55 | 39.3% |
| | Associate Professor | 9 | 6.4% |
| | Lecturer | 64 | 45.7% |
| | Teaching Assistan | 5 | 3.6% |
| Age | < 25 Years | 1 | 0.7% |
| | 25-35 Years | 44 | 31.4% |
| | 36-45 Years | 59 | 42.1% |
| | 46-55 Years | 25 | 17.9% |
| | > Years | 11 | 7.9% |
| Years of Experience | < 5 Years | 55 | 39.3% |
| | 5-10 Years | 80 | 57.1% |
| | >10 Years | 5 | 3.6% |

<Table 2> Reliability Analysis

| Item | Cronbach's Alpha |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| (KS1) I see benefits from exchanging and combining ideas with one another | 0.986 |
| (KS2) I believe that by exchanging and combining ideas I can move new projects or initiatives forward more quickly than by working alone | 0.986 |
| (KS3) At the end of each day, I feel that I have learned from other members from my organisation by exchanging and combining ideas | 0.987 |
| (KS4) I am proficient at combining and exchanging ideas to solve problems or create opportunities | 0.987 |
| (KS5) I do not do a good job of sharing my individual ideas to come up with new ideas, products or services | 0.987 |
| (KS6) I am capable of sharing my expertise to bring new projects or initiatives to fruition | 0.987 |
| (KS7) I am willing to exchange and combine ideas with their co-workers | 0.987 |
| (Per1) I am good in my work compared to my colleagues | 0.986 |
| (Per2) I am effective in my work compared to my colleagues | 0.986 |
| (Per3) The quality of my work is better compared to that of my colleagues | 0.987 |
| (Per4) I am more creative at work compared to my colleagues | 0.986 |
| (Per5) I have better collaborative capability compared to my colleagues | 0.986 |
| (Per6) Knowledge Sharing helps me to come up with new ideas relating to quality-related work. | 0.986 |
| (Per7) Knowledge Sharing helps me to try out innovative ideas in performing quality-related work | 0.986 |
| (IT1) I use IT tools to enhance the quality of my work | 0.987 |
| (IT2) I have access to IT support | 0.986 |
| (IT3) I have IT skill that assists me to use IT devices | 0.987 |
| (IT4) I use IT infrastructure in my work | 0.987 |
| (IT5) I can access IT (IT accessibility) to enhance the quality of services delivered | 0.987 |

<Table 3> KMO and Bartlett's Test

| Element | Value | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | 0.965 | |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 4349.237 |
| | Df | 171 |
| | Sig. | 0.000 |

<Table 4> Results of the Principal Component Analysis

| Variable | Item | Factor Loading |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Knowledge Sharing | I see benefits from Knowledge Sharing with one another in performing quality-related work (KS1) | 0.835 |
| | I believe that by Knowledge Sharing I can move quality-related work forward more quickly than by working alone (KS2) | 0.870 |
| | I have learned from other members by exchanging and combining ideas in performing quality-related work (KS3) | 0.788 |
| | I am proficient at combining and exchanging ideas to solve problems or create opportunities in regards to performing quality-related work (KS4) | 0.787 |
| | I am willing to exchange and combine ideas with my co-workers in performing quality-related work (KS5) | 0.822 |
| | I get and share information from Reports, official documents while performing quality-related work (KS6) | 0.680 |
| | I frequently share knowledge from education and training to others in terms of quality-related work (KS7) | 0.777 |
| Individual Performance | Knowledge Sharing helps improving the quality of my work. (Per1) | 0.871 |
| | Knowledge Sharing helps improving my productivity in performing quality-related work. (Per2) | 0.866 |
| | Knowledge Sharing helps me to accomplish more quality-related work than would otherwise be possible. (Per3) | 0.805 |
| | Knowledge Sharing helps me to perform quality-related work better. (Per4) | 0.883 |
| | Knowledge Sharing helps me to identify innovative ways of performing quality-related work. (Per5) | 0.851 |
| | Knowledge Sharing helps me to come up with new ideas relating to quality-related work. (Per6) | 0.874 |
| | Knowledge Sharing helps me to try out innovative ideas in performing quality-related work. (Per7) | 0.861 |
| Information Technology Usage | I use IT tools to facilitate communication with my colleagues to perform quality-related work (IT1) | 0.799 |
| | I use IT tools share documents with my colleagues to perform quality-related work (IT2) | 0.824 |
| | I have the necessary skills that assist me to use IT tools for knowledge sharing (IT3) | 0.777 |
| | I use IT tools to access external knowledge that can help me in performing quality-related work (IT4) | 0.781 |
| | In order to solve quality-related problems, I use IT tools to facilitate discussion with my colleagues (IT5) | 0.723 |

is an identity matrix is rejected. Therefore, the principal component analysis can be conducted. <Table 4> below shows the factor loading for the various items.

The values of the above analysed factors' loading is more than 0.6. This means that they can effectively be used for further analysis.

4.4. Hypotheses Testing

A correlation analysis test was carried out to test the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance (H1).

From the analysis shown in <Table 5>, there is a strong positive correlation between knowledge sharing and individual performance ($r = 0.909$), $N = 140$. The correlation is significant ($p < 0.05$), which confirms that there is a relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance.

4.5. Mediation Test

The study sought to investigate the impacts of IT usage as a mediator variable between knowledge sharing and individual performance. Regression analysis was used to assess this mediating effect of the intervening variable, information technology. Baron and Kenny (1986) were the proponents of a four-step technique of ascertaining the mediating effects.

Step 1: Knowledge sharing was regressed against individual performance. The results as follows:

From the results presented in <Table 6>, the R value is 0.909 which shows a strong positive relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance. The relationship is significant as shown

in the above table, ($p < 0.05$).

Step 2: Knowledge sharing was regressed against the mediator variable, Information technology. The results are as shown below;

As depicted in <Table 7>, there is a strong positive relationship between knowledge sharing and IT ($R = 0.872$). R square (0.761) shows that the predictor variable in this case can be able to predict variation in the mediating variable by 76.1%. This means that only 23.9% of the variation of the mediating variable is predicted by other factors. The relationship is significant as shown in the <Table 8> below ($p < 0.05$).

Step 3: The mediator variable, IT was regressed against the outcome variable, individual performance. The results are as shown below.

As <Table 8> presents, R value is 0.900, which shows that there is a strong positive relationship between the mediator variable, IT and the outcome variable, individual performance. R square, value is 0.811 which means that IT accounts for 81.1% of variation in the individual performance. Therefore, 18.9% of the variation in the individual performance is accounted for by other factors. The relationship is significant, ($p < 0.05$).

Step 4: calculating the combined direct and indirect effects through regression test.

From <Table 9> above, R value is 0.935, which

<Table 5> Correlation between Knowledge Sharing and Individual Performance

| Correlations | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| | | Knowledge Sharing | Individual Performance |
| Knowledge Sharing | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.909** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0.000 |
| | N | 140 | 140 |
| Individual Performance | Pearson Correlation | 0.909** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | |
| | N | 140 | 140 |

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 lever (2-tailed).

<Table 6> Regression Test between Knowledge Sharing and Individual Performance

| R | R ² | F (1,138) | p-value | Beta (β) | Sig. | Coefficient of Knowledge Sharing | Constant |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-------|----------------------------------|----------|
| 0.909 | 0.826 | 656.841 | 0.000 | 0.909 | 0.000 | 0.984 | 0.048 |

<Table 7> Regression Test between Knowledge Sharing and IT

| R | R ² | F (1,138) | p-value | Beta (β) | Sig. | Coefficient of Knowledge Sharing | Constant |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-------|----------------------------------|----------|
| 0.872 | 0.761 | 439.610 | 0.000 | 0.872 | 0.000 | 0.907 | 0.302 |

<Table 8> Regression Test between IT and Individual Performance

| R | R ² | F (1,138) | p-value | Beta (β) | Sig. | Coefficient of IT | Constant |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-------|-------------------|----------|
| 0.900 | 0.811 | 590.314 | 0.000 | 0.900 | 0.000 | 0.938 | 0.230 |

<Table 9> Regression Test between Knowledge Sharing, Individual Performance and IT

| R | R ² | F (1,138) | p-value | Beta (β) Knowledge Sharing | Beta (β) IT | Sig. | Coefficient of Knowledge Sharing | Coefficient of IT | Constant |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 0.935 | 0.875 | 477.344 | 0.000 | 0.518 | 0.449 | 0.000 | 0.560 | 0.467 | 0.093 |

shows a very strong positive relationship between the both the predictor and intervening variable; knowledge sharing and IT against individual performance. The R square is 0.875, which means that the combined effects of knowledge sharing and IT account for 87.5% of the variation in the individual performance. The relationship is significant, ($p < 0.05$).

V. Discussions

The analysis results support the existing of relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance. In addition, it shows that knowledge sharing is related to IT and IT acts as a mediator between knowledge sharing and individual performance. Many institutions of higher education consider

knowledge sharing as a key enabler for enhancing individual performance and consequently, institutional performance. The integration of knowledge sharing processes and IT within an institution facilitates the delivery of quality services, a process that in turn creates a platform for improved performance (Herold, 2016).

Performing quality related work requires collaboration and communication between academics. Thus, and in order to do such communication quickly, academics highly depend on IT to share their experience and knowledge. It is expected that the academics seek useful and easy to use mechanism to disseminate information effectively so that graduates coming out of such institutions are equipped with the best knowledge that they can use to develop new ideas and experiences for further innovation (Yu and Jo, 2014).

IT has been identified as one of the major concepts that can be used to influence individual performances among the academics.

IT usage plays a vital role of eradicating the boundary for effective communication which can easily inhibit interaction between academicians (Bulman and Fairlie, 2016). The emergent of different kinds of IT tools that facilitate communication between people eases and encourages the use of these tools for the purpose of knowledge sharing. Examples of emergent tools are instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp or traditional tools such as emails. The availability of information and advice at the right time definitely improves the individual performance by eliminating or overcoming any obstacles that hinder the work smoothness. IT plays a significant role in the efficient knowledge sharing process through aiding in fast knowledge gathering, storing as well as exchanging. Based on this, IT is a crucial factor in enhancing the individual performance. The exchange of knowledge from one person to another leads to development of new ideas or concepts, which ultimately, supports individual performance. The influence of IT usage in the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance is based on the utilization of IT on the knowledge sharing processes. Although many studies tend to investigate the relationship between knowledge sharing and organisational performance, the present study has proved that knowledge sharing is also significant for individual performance, based on the micro-foundations of organisational performance.

VI. Conclusion

This study sought to investigate the mediating

effect of IT usage on the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance among academics performing quality-assurance related activities. The testing of the hypothesis proved that knowledge sharing is related to individual performance, and IT usage is found mediating this the relationship.

There are several theoretical implications made by this research, such as contributing to the literature of knowledge sharing within the academic fields which lack of enough literature. The research also confirms the effects of IT on the relationship between knowledge sharing and individual performance. It has been found out therefore that IT is an important facet that can be used to accelerate the knowledge sharing pre and post-processes.

The use of technology is one of factors that have been proven to facilitate learning in higher institutions of learning among various academicians. In business organisations, the use of IT has been rated as one of the greatest revolutionary concepts that aids in the smooth running of activities as well as enhancing the flow of business activities. This is not an exceptional concept among the various academic institutes. Academic processes can also use IT in their systems to facilitate efficient and effective delivery of services. The use of IT in knowledge dissemination works to make learning processes more efficient.

The research is limited to developing countries, particularly, Saudi Arabia, and to one university. A mixed method approach could have integrated the views from the perspective of the participants. From another point of view, the study targeted one institution only. The views of this group may not represent the concepts held by other groups in different settings. Additionally, the study used only one perspective of knowledge management process; knowl-

edge sharing. The sample used in the study could also limit generalizability.

The research contributed to addition of information on the existing literature. For instance, previous researches have dealt with the general knowledge management concepts and with limited focus on individual performances, which is a vital factor as a micro foundation element of organisational performance. Knowledge sharing practices on individual performance assists the researchers to identify the micro-concepts that are involved in the overall performance of an organisation. The practice of

knowledge sharing between academics is worth studying. The context of developing countries is suffering of limited research on KM in, in general, and in the universities context in particular. This research attempted in explaining the relationships between knowledge sharing, performance and IT usage. Such understanding will be of use for decision makers to enhance the environment for academics to share knowledge in order to improve their performance. Furthermore, the significance of IT usage facilitating such relationship can influence the decision of IT investment.

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