Information Usefulness and Workplace Cohesion: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

This study researched the relationship between information usefulness and workplace cohesion in organizations. Information uniqueness when it is not properly established in the workplace especially when data is not distinct and not easily duplicated. Research objectives focused on ascertaining the role of dimensions such as information distinctiveness, rarity, and suitability in advancing outcomes of 3 workplace cohesion such as assignment cohesion, social cohesion, and collaboration. In information usefulness in workplace cohesion rarity when organizations are not likely to be rare, it can cause negative experiences such as conflicts, political infighting, and uncooperative team members. Organizational culture not properly influenced might lead to insignificant decision-making. This research also examined the control of organizational culture on the correlation among the variables. The paper discussed the role of information usefulness – specifying its meaning and implications for institutions. Focus was also placed on the individual aspect of workplace cohesion. It was thereafter concluded that information usefulness – based on related features such as information uniqueness, rarity, and appropriateness, drives the extent of workplace cohesion and contributes substantially to outcomes of task cohesion, social cohesion, and collaboration. This correlation is moreover inclined and inured by the scenery or outline of customs modified and applied by the organization. It was also recommended that considerations of applicability and context be emphasized in the setting of information and its use in the organization.

Keywords

Information usefulness, workplace cohesion, organizational learning.

Introduction

Workplace cohesion refers to the degree of connectedness, unity, and harmony exhibited among individuals, teams, and departments within an organization. Banki (2010) emphasized that workplace cohesion is essential for fostering collaboration, thereby enhancing the effective control and coordination of organizational resources. This view aligns with Carless (2000), who argued that workplace relationships establish the necessary foundation for organizational focus. Organizations harness cohesion by integrating information, reassigning expertise, and enhancing their adaptability in dynamic environments.

Cohesion embodies the collective understanding among organizational members. Banki (2010) posited that cohesion fosters a positive and supportive work environment by

reinforcing both social and task-based systems. Chen and Tang (2009) demonstrated that cohesion correlates with shared responsibilities, ultimately boosting both individual and team performance. Research consistently identifies two primary dimensions of cohesion: task and social collaboration. Carless (2000) proposed that task fluency is intrinsically linked to social interactions. However, Carron and Brawley (2000) contended that task and social cohesion are distinct, with task-related communication not necessarily translating into social interactions.

The emphasis on task and social cohesion in research arises from the widespread use of teams in organizational structures. Reber and Reber (2001) highlighted that shared team interpretations enhance collective effectiveness. However, limited research explores individual experiences of workplace cohesion and their implications for employee performance. Allen and Morton (2004) and Dewan and Kraemer (2000) identified information as a critical organizational resource, with Dennis (2007) noting that information systems bridge workplace differences and promote understanding across organizational processes. Access to information empowers employees to navigate challenges and fulfill their roles effectively.

This section of the paper offered a conceptual review of the variables – information usefulness and workplace cohesion. The section addressed the conceptualization of the variables and the extent to which they are manifested or expressed within a variety of contexts.

Information Usefulness

Information usefulness pertains to the relevance, distinctiveness, and timeliness of information within an organization. Modern organizations increasingly rely on information to address business challenges, improve managerial processes, enhance productivity, and maintain a competitive edge (Hacker & Saxton, 2007). Hobday (2000) noted that information systems play a crucial role in supporting both manufacturing and administrative tasks. The evolution of information technology has made it indispensable for managing organizational processes, encompassing hardware, software, telecommunications, and database management (Heinz, 2002).

Katana (2011) emphasized that information technology enhances communication, integration, and service delivery. As organizations evolve, information systems become pivotal in sustaining operations and competing in dynamic markets (Kevin, 2006). Dennis (2007) asserted that information technologies have transformed various business functions, including external environment scanning and stakeholder consultations. Mwania and Muganda (2012) observed that emerging mobile technologies compel organizations to rethink their strategic approaches.

Information Uniqueness

Information uniqueness, a vital dimension of information usefulness, describes the distinctiveness of information and its ability to provide exclusive advantages. Dennis (2007) argued that unique information enhances organizational competitiveness by offering non-replicable benefits. Dewan and Kraemer (2000) posited that unique information strengthens an organization's strategic position, while Allen and Morton (2004) emphasized the importance of context-specific, tailored information. Mano (2009) further suggested that decision-making and organizational behavior are significantly influenced by information quality.

Information Rarity

Information rarity denotes the scarcity of sought-after information, which enhances its value and usefulness. Mano (2009) observed that rare information grants organizations a competitive edge by making their insights less replicable. Loveman (2001) argued that scarce resources stimulate organizational innovativeness and creativity, enabling differentiation from competitors. Kinuthia (2012) highlighted that information rarity equips organizations with unique capabilities, fostering competitive advantage.

Information Appropriateness

Information appropriateness concerns the relevance and applicability of information within an organizational context. Katana (2011) asserted that the practicality of actions depends on contextual factors. Allen and Morton (2004) linked organizational effectiveness to learning outcomes and knowledge acquisition. Dennis (2007) identified factors such as timing, infrastructure availability, and industry competition as critical determinants of information appropriateness. Dewan and Kraemer (2000) emphasized that appropriate information enhances efficiency by aligning skills, competencies, and operational tools with organizational objectives.

Workplace Cohesion Conceptualization

Casey-Campbell and Martens (2009) defined cohesion as the tendency of group members to form shared bonds, uniting them as a collective entity. This concept is central to group structure and social functioning. Cohesion is widely regarded as a significant group variable due to its positive correlation with job satisfaction, psychological well-being, and group performance (Carron & Brawley, 2000; Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003).

Festinger (cited in Chen & Tang, 2009) described cohesion as the sum of forces acting on members to remain in the group. Gross and Martin (cited in Chen & Tang, 2009) defined cohesion as the group's resistance to disruptive forces. Banki (2010) viewed cohesion as the desire of group members to stay together, while Aoyagi, Cox, and McGuire (2008) characterized it as the degree to which group members communicate and collaborate.

Festinger's conceptualization identified three dimensions of cohesion: attraction to the group, task commitment, and group prestige (Beal et al., 2003; Carless & De Paola, 2000). Andrews et al. (2008) distinguished between group integration (GI) and attraction to the group (ATG), with GI reflecting members' connection to the group and ATG representing attraction to fellow group members. Hogg's social attraction theory (cited in Chen & Tang, 2009) suggested that group members are more attracted to those who resemble the group prototype, with social attraction increasing when members perceive alignment with the group's defining attributes.

The multidimensional nature of cohesion underscores the complexity of the construct and the challenge of establishing a unified definition (Reber & Reber, 2001; Banki, 2010). Understanding the interplay between individual and group-level cohesion is essential for developing comprehensive models of workplace cohesion and its outcomes

Methodology

Research Design

This paper adopts a theoretical research design to explore the relationship between information usefulness and workplace cohesion. The study relies on a conceptual framework built upon extensive literature review and critical analysis of previous empirical studies and theoretical models related to information systems, organizational behavior, and group dynamics.

Data Sources

The primary data source for this study is secondary data obtained from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and reputable online databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science. The selected literature covers information usefulness and quality, workplace cohesion theories, organizational behavior models, Resource-Based View (RBV) of information systems, and group dynamics and social cohesion.

Analytical Approach

A deductive approach is employed to analyze how information usefulness influences workplace cohesion. The relationship is assessed by analyzing the interaction between information quality variables, group cohesion indicators, and organizational performance outcomes. This methodology is appropriate for a conceptual paper as it allows for an in-depth examination of theoretical constructs without relying on primary data collection.

Results and Discussion

Information uniqueness is crucial and contributes through the distinctive advantage it offers an organization to workplace cohesion, enhancing outcomes of task cohesion, social cohesion, and collaboration. Information rarity is essential as it implies scarce and inimitability of knowledge which enhances workplace cohesion leading to outcomes of task cohesion, social cohesion, and collaboration. Information appropriateness points to the use of applicability of knowledge that effectively drives workplace cohesion and thus facilitates outcomes of task cohesion, social cohesion, and collaboration. Organizational culture is important as it creates the atmosphere and conditions that define the relationship between information usefulness and workplace cohesion

Conclusion

The relationship between information usefulness and workplace cohesion, as affirmed herein points to the imperatives of a more adaptable and precise application of information – through appropriate methods and systems in the coordination and management of the organization's resources (financial and non-financial). This is important for building and enriching the level of connectedness in the workplace and for increasing trust and understanding between individuals and units in the organization. Imperative to the success of workplace cohesion is, therefore, the emphasis on the uniqueness, rarity, and appropriateness of information available or accessible to the organization; as well as the existing culture of the organization. In this regard, this research concludes that information usefulness – based on related features such as information uniqueness, rarity, and appropriateness, drives the extent of workplace cohesion and contributes substantially to outcomes of task cohesion, social cohesion, and collaboration.

Organizations must look at recognizing and obtaining facts that mainly offer exceptional ease which significantly vary from the use by other organizations and which contribute toward their creativity. Organizations should proceed with frameworks that center on accepting and proceeding on exceptional unique information which assures them of innovative approaches toward addressing their challenges and also increasing their value and relevance within their various contexts. Organizations should adapt specific information appropriate to their framework and also related in terms of specificity for directed to the confront the actual to their environment. It is recommended that organizations focus on advancing values and cultural adaptations that are inclined to support and drive their organizational strategies and operations such that also positively condition and enhance the outcomes.

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