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The Influential Factors of Corporate Culture on Knowledge Sharing Among Employees in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Private Sector in Hanoi

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Abstract

Today, knowledge has become a vital resource for enhancing the competitiveness of enterprises. In Vietnam, although knowledge management is not yet widely adopted, both large and small businesses have begun to pay attention to promoting knowledge sharing. To improve the competitive advantage of Vietnamese enterprises—especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the private sector, a dynamic segment of the economy—encouraging knowledge sharing among employees is considered one of the most effective solutions. However, previous studies have shown that knowledge sharing is heavily influenced by corporate culture factors. Based on Mueller's (2013) model, this study examines the impact of corporate culture elements on knowledge sharing. The survey sample includes 479 employees working at SMEs in the private sector in Hanoi. These private enterprises in Hanoi have continuously developed and innovated, contributing more than 40% of the city's GDP and creating jobs for over 50% of the workforce. This demonstrates that SMEs in Hanoi's private sector are playing a key, pioneering role in the capital and national development.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Knowledge Sharing, Corporate Culture, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Private Sector.

Introduction

Today, knowledge is considered a strategically important resource (Drucker, 1993), and many organizations have viewed knowledge management as a core strategy to enhance their competitive advantage (Lawson, 2003). In knowledge management, knowledge sharing (knowledge sharing) between employees and departments in the organization is necessary, helping to improve the productivity and efficiency of each employee and each department. Several previous studies (studies) have recognized that promoting knowledge sharing is difficult, but critical to the success of a business (Davenport and Prusak, 1998) because it promotes the flow of knowledge within the organization, and benefits the organization as a whole (Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland, 2004).

However, not all organizations have the right culture for knowledge sharing. In fact, efforts to implement knowledge management often encounter difficulties from habits, thoughts, practices, etc. unsuitability of the organization. Corporate culture (corporate culture) is identified as one of the most important barriers/thrusts of knowledge management, it can not only limit but also promote knowledge management activities (Skacilik, 2005).

Most large businesses are proactive in sharing knowledge because they see knowledge

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management as their competitive advantage. In contrast, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs in the private sector) do not pay much attention to knowledge sharing, they only feel that this is necessary when knowledge sharing can support and solve problems immediately. They are not aware of the long-term benefits and importance of knowledge management, leading to a lack of initiative in sharing knowledge. In Vietnam, small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector account for the majority (>95%) and are the driving force for the development of the whole economy, so it is very meaningful to study the factors affecting knowledge sharing in small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector. Therefore, the successful implementation of knowledge management in small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector is essential to ensure the development of this dynamic economic sector. The necessary condition for that success is to build an appropriate corporate culture, so that, from there, the organization develops in a knowledge-oriented manner.

In the context of a developing country like Vietnam, there is relatively little research on the factors that promote knowledge sharing in small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector, so more research is needed on this topic. In addition, some previous studies (Pham et al., 2014) on knowledge sharing in Vietnamese enterprises also show that the aspect of corporate culture plays a quite important role.

For these reasons, this study focuses on understanding the factors of corporate culture that influence knowledge sharing among employees in the private sector SMEs in Vietnam. The main objectives of the study are: (1) Identify corporate culture factors that influence knowledge sharing, (2) Measure the impact of these factors on knowledge sharing in small and medium-sized enterprises in Vietnam's private sector, and (3) Propose a number of recommendations for small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector to improve knowledge-oriented corporate culture. Due to resource constraints, the study will limit the scope of the survey to small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector in Hanoi. Since Hanoi is the largest economic center in the country, private sector SMEs in Hanoi can represent private sector SMEs in Vietnam.

Theoretical Basis and Research Model

Theoretical Basis

Knowledge management is the process of identifying, sharing, using, and practicing knowledge within an organization (Choi & Lee, 2002). In order to manage knowledge effectively, a management cycle needs to be established, including many steps from grasping to using knowledge. Kimiz (2005) synthesized previous knowledge management cycles and introduced an integrated knowledge management cycle consisting of 3 steps, namely: (1) Knowledge capture and creation, (2) Knowledge distribution and sharing, and (3) Knowledge search and use. In which, the step "Knowledge distribution and sharing" is said to be the most important and difficult, because it involves a lot of human problems.

Knowledge Sharing is the process of transferring knowledge (especially hidden knowledge) from one person to another, at the individual level (exchange) or collective (training, coaching). This is an important stage of the knowledge management cycle, it ensures the success of knowledge management, Because thanks to it hidden knowledge (which accounts for the majority of knowledge resources) can be captured and shared throughout the company and generate organizational intelligence.

Corporate Culture Concept

The wider society has a large culture of which businesses are a part of society. Therefore, in each enterprise, there will exist systems or standards of characteristic values, images, and styles that are respected by the enterprise and transmitted from one member to another, from the old class to the new class, becoming values, concepts and customs, etc. tradition is deeply ingrained in the operation of that business and governs the emotions, mindsets and behaviors of all members of the business in pursuing and realizing their goals. The concept used to reflect these systems is called by various names such as corporate culture, company culture, corporate culture, or corporate culture. Every business has its own corporate cultural identity. Similar to culture, there are many different perspectives on corporate culture. All of these perspectives will help us understand corporate culture more comprehensively and fully.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO): “Corporate culture is a special mixture of values, standards, habits and traditions, attitudes and etiquette that are all unique to a known organization.”

A popular and widely accepted definition given by institutional researcher Edgar Schein: “Corporate culture is the synthesis of common concepts that members of a company learn in the process of solving internal problems and dealing with problems with the surrounding environment.” (E. Schein, 2010).

According to Nguyen Manh Quan (2011): “Corporate culture is defined as a system of meanings, values, core beliefs, perceptions and thinking methods that are agreed upon by all members of an organization and have a wide range of influence on the way members act”.

According to Duong Thi Lieu (2009): “Corporate culture is a system of values, norms, concepts and behaviors of the enterprise, which governs the activities of all members of the enterprise and creates its own business identity”.

According to Do Minh Cuong (2001): “Business culture is the use of cultural factors into the business activities of subjects, is the culture that subjects create in the business process, forming stable and specific business types”.

The common thread of the above definitions is that corporate culture is stable and sustainable, despite the constant changes of individuals, including founders and business leaders. It has a profound impact on the action motivation of the business, forming a strategic orientation for the business itself. Corporate culture plays a role as a guiding force, the unified will of all leaders and employees of the enterprise.

Based on the research of scholars, corporate culture can be defined as follows: “Corporate culture is all the cultural factors that are selected, created, used and expressed by an enterprise in business activities, creating the business identity of that enterprise”. (Do Minh Cuong, 2001).

Content of Corporate Culture

Through the study of many documents, it is shown that corporate culture has the following characteristics:

First, corporate culture is related to awareness. Individuals are aware of the culture of the organization through what they see and hear within the organization.” Even though members may have different levels of knowledge and different work positions, they always tend to describe the corporate culture in the same way. That is the “sharing” of corporate culture.

Second, the corporate culture is empirical. Corporate culture refers to how members perceive the organization, which means that they describe, rather than systematize, the organization's meanings and values.

Third, corporate culture is unique. Each organization and unit has different operating conditions, scales and operational objectives and is run by a team of personnel with different personalities and business philosophies. Moreover, the benefit of building a corporate culture is to create its own specificity and identity for the business to help distinguish one business from another. Therefore, the corporate culture in each organization will have different characteristics, different strengths and weaknesses, rich and diverse.

Fourth, corporate culture has the characteristics of unifying the communication and behavior of everyone in the same organization. It is the unification of people's behavior towards all activities inside and outside the business that has brought business results to the business.

Fifth, corporate culture is not acquired in a day or two, but through a whole process of building and cultivating. The process of building a corporate culture does not have a beginning and an end point, but the corporate culture must be built over a long period of time. Corporate culture is not immutable, but over time it will always change to suit the new development trend of the business.

Structure of Corporate Culture

Corporate culture is composed of 3 elements, each of which is expressed with different characteristics and forms, but they all have a common purpose, which is to express the cultural characteristics of the organization and spread that culture to the members of the organization. According to Edgar H. Schein (2010), the elements that make up corporate culture can be divided into the following 3 groups of factors:

The first factor: Tangible cultural values

Tangible cultural values are the most obvious and recognizable outward manifestations of corporate culture. Tangible entities that most comprehensively describe the physical environment and social activities in an enterprise include the following basic forms:

The first is, "Typical architecture and corporate appearance". Considered the face of the business, architecture and appearance are always interested and built by businesses. Architecture and appearance will make a strong impression on customers and partners,... about the strength, success and professionalism of any business. "The appearance is reflected in the shape of the architecture and the scale of the space of the business. The architecture is reflected in the design of the offices, the interior arrangement in the room, the main colors,...". All those expressions can make a characteristic of the business. In fact, structure and appearance have an impact on the psychology of employees during their work.

Secondly, celebrations, ceremonies and cultural activities. These are activities that have been anticipated in advance and carefully prepared. According to the Vietnamese Dictionary, "Etiquette" is all the customary common practices applied when conducting a ceremony. Accordingly, rituals are rituals that have become habits, which are assumed to be carried out when conducting a certain activity; It shows up in everyday life, not just on special occasions. Rituals create cultural characteristics, with each different culture, the rituals also have different forms." The celebration is an activity organized to remember the values of the business and an opportunity to honor the business, enhance the pride of employees about the business. Other

activities such as music activities, sports, competitions,... is a popular activity in cultural life. These activities aim to create opportunities for employees to exercise their health, enrich their spiritual life, enhance understanding, exchange and mutual sharing among members.

Third, language, slogans. "Language is a means of communication in daily life, determined by the way of behavior and communication between members of the business". People who live and work in the same corporate environment tend to share the same language. Members of the organization to work together need to understand each other through the use of the same language, the typical "slang" of the business. Words like "perfect service", "customer is god",... are understood in different ways depending on the culture of each business. "A slogan is a concise statement, using simple, easy-to-remember words that most concisely expresses a company's business philosophy."

The fourth is, "Symbols, traditional songs, uniforms". "Symbolism is to denote something that is not itself and has the effect of helping people recognize or understand what it represents. Architectural works, ceremonies, anecdotes, and slogans all contain the characteristics of symbols. Another symbol is the logo. A logo is a creative work that expresses the image of an organization using the language of art. A logo is a simple but meaningful logo, so businesses pay great attention to it. Logos are printed on other symbols of the business such as rules and regulations, company nameplates, uniforms, publications, product packaging, circulating documents,..." Traditional songs and uniforms are cultural values on special occasions, creating characteristics for businesses and creating empathy among members. These are also symbols that create employees' pride in their business. In addition, anecdotes, oral stories, typical publications... are symbols that help people see more clearly the cultural values of the organization.

Factor 2: Agreed values

This factor refers to the level of acceptance, approval or sharing of values including strategies, goals, rules, regulations, vision, and mission. These values are publicly announced for every member of the company to strive to implement. This is a guideline for all activities of employees.

Factor 3: Basic views (implicit values)

"The implicit values are beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings that have been deeply ingrained in the subconscious of each member of the business. Implicit intentions are the basis for actions, orienting the formation of values in perception for individuals." The implicit value system is expressed through the following relationships: The relationship between humans and the environment; Human-to-human relationships; Implicit in human nature; The nature of human behavior; The nature of truth and right.

In addition, in the enterprise, there is a value system that is not taken for granted and the values that leaders want to bring into the enterprise. The values accepted by the members will continue to be maintained over time and gradually taken for granted. After a while, these values will become implicit. Implicit intentions usually change very little and significantly affect working styles, decisions, communication and behavior. The influence of implicit values is sometimes greater than the influence of the values expressed.

Experience in developing corporate culture of a number of domestic and foreign enterprises

Honda Group's experience in developing corporate culture

Honda is a Japanese economic corporation specializing in the production and sale of automobiles, motorcycles, and mechanical machinery. The founder of Honda is Mr. Shuchir Honda. Honda was founded in 1946, and in 1965 Honda became the No. 1 motorcycle factory in Japan and the world, and Honda still holds this position.

At the beginning of the business, Honda set out the company's basic motto: "not to be left behind others", to create the world's leading technical standards. With this clear, drastic and bold motto, the whole company devotes itself to technical research and development. Honda openly stated that "Honda's ideal goal is the whole world" and educated employees throughout the company to strive for that great goal. In 1954, Honda took its products to the speed test with the world's most advanced motorcycles with the aim of comparing Honda products with other rival products around the world. This time the company did not achieve a high ranking, but it helped the company have a lot of experience to improve products. In 1959, the Company participated in the competition for the second time and ranked 6th. In 1961, the Company won the overall victory from first to fifth place with both 125 cc and 250 cc vehicles. This achievement eloquently proves Honda's world's No. 1 quality after only 7 years of challenges in the international market, and at the same time successfully introduces Honda's products to the world. If in 1959, Europe sold about 80-100 thousand two-wheeled motorcycles to the United States but Japan did not sell any of them, in 1963, Honda exported 126 thousand units to the United States, in 1965 it increased to 440 thousand units. By 1983, Honda two-wheelers accounted for over 25% of the global market, becoming the world's No. 1 motorcycle factory, the Company's output this year was 3.66 million two-wheeled motorcycles.

Today, the company's motto is a long-term commitment to contributing to the communities in which it operates, both economically and socially. The company believes that the responsibility to make the community better is just as important as providing quality products that satisfy the highest customer satisfaction. The company's motto is expressed through 2 messages: "Respect for the Individuals" and "The Three Joys". These messages guide the Company as well as each member of the Company in all activities. The message "Respect for all individuals" with 3 basic elements of trust, initiative, creativity and fairness expresses Honda's philosophy towards employees. These philosophies are also the motto for relationships with external parties such as suppliers, customers, partners, and society. With the message "Three joys", the Company believes that all employees participating in 3 stages: purchasing, producing goods and selling must feel happy with their work. This demonstrates Honda's commitment to creating the best working environment for its employees. The company has set a strategic vision: "Society will be better with the presence of Honda". The Company's Mission is: "Enriching society, economy, and educating the community through collective and individual participation." Specific goals include: 1. Recognizing and responding to the needs of society; 2. Seek the sympathy, sharing, and commitment of partners; 3. Compatible investment for company resources; 4. Maximize potential profits; 5. Support Honda's business plan. All these slogans of the Company help to clearly orient the vision for employees as well as the guideline and basis for all their actions. All have created a cultural identity for Honda in the world.

Experience in developing corporate culture of Unilever Vietnam

Unilever is a world-renowned British and Dutch global conglomerate in the production and trading of home, personal and food care items. Unilever was one of the first companies to access the Vietnamese market as soon as it opened in 1995. The company has always achieved double-digit growth over the past 10 years of operation. Unilever Vietnam has always been the leader

in the market of family and personal care products, food with an average market share of 60% for all items. Famous brands of Unilever in Vietnam such as: Sunsilk, Dove, Clear, Lifebuoy, Lux, Pond's, Hazeline, Omo, Viso, Comfort, Sunlight, P/S, Close-up, Knorr, Lipton,... significantly contributing to improving the quality of life of Vietnamese people since opening up and renewing the economy. Unilever Vietnam is a typical example of the most successful foreign company in Vietnam, making great contributions to the community. After 20 years of operation, the Company was awarded the 2nd class Labor Medal by the State and many other titles such as "Company of the Year", "Enterprise with the Best Style",... With a large scale of operation, dynamic business style, and pioneering business, Unilever Vietnam is considered a foreign company that has had a great influence on the economic activities of businesses in Vietnam since its opening, contributing to improving market quality. improve the quality of the environment and be a place to train a lot of good, dynamic and creative workers. Unilever Vietnam is also considered a model of successfully combining multinational corporate culture and local culture, typically through the creation of new products that are modern but imbued with Vietnamese identity and very successful in the market such as: Sunsilk Bo Ket, P/S salt, P/S Green Tea, Viso Lemon,... The Company's community activities are also highly appreciated such as the OMO program to brighten the future, P/S to protect the smile of Vietnam, sponsorship programs in education, and a house of love for martyrs' mothers,...

Achieving all those achievements is thanks to "the desire to constantly occupy the hearts and trust of Vietnamese consumers, not to be complacent and stop at the results obtained, but to look forward to the future with a higher level of striving,... Aspiration instead of toothpaste people only say P/S, instead of detergent people only say Omo... the desire to bring products to all parts of the country..." - (quoting the call of the Chairman of Unilever Vietnam Group during the Unilever Vietnam Family Day). Besides, it is also thanks to the concerted efforts of all employees for the common goal of the Company: "Perfecting the health and beauty needs of every Vietnamese family"; is the concretization of the action motto that has been agreed upon by more than 2000 Unilever employees, which is: "1. Dream it & Do it; 2. Learn Everywhere and Apply Everyday; 3. Plan well and Do it right the first time; 4. Support each other and Challenge together; 5. Make it Success and Celebrate it".

With the objectives and mottos of operation that are both in line with the general goals and motto of Unilever globally, and the identity of the Vietnamese nation has been quickly instilled in each employee of the Company to guide each action of the Company in the fiercely competitive environment of the field of consumer goods production. as well as in the aspiration to win the hearts of all Vietnamese people.

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Small and medium-sized enterprises in the private economic sector are business establishments that have registered their business in accordance with law, which are divided into three levels: micro, small and medium according to the size of total capital or the average number of employees per year. In this study, to facilitate the survey, the authors chose to classify according to the World Bank's criteria for the number of employees, in which, small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector are enterprises with 300 full-time employees or less.

Because of their small size, small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector have the following characteristics: (1) flexible and changeable, (2) limited resources, (3) lack of standardized processes and family-style management, (4) low average life expectancy. In Vietnam, many studies have shown that small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector

have the following characteristics: accounting for a large proportion of the total number of enterprises (>95%), making an important contribution to GDP growth (>40% of total GDP), creating new jobs, contributing to poverty alleviation (> 1 million new jobs/year), have the ability to innovate, helping the economy become more dynamic.

Current Situation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Private Economic Sector in Hanoi City

In recent years, businesses in Hanoi have made continuous developments in both quantity and quality. According to data from the Hanoi Department of Planning and Investment, as of December 31, 2019, the total number of enterprises operating in Hanoi is 155,940 enterprises, mainly SMEs (accounting for over 96%), of which enterprises in the agricultural sector account for about 1-2%; industry accounts for 12-14%; trade - services and other industries account for 84-87%. In 2019 alone, the business sector attracted more than 3.2 million workers (an increase of 82.7 thousand employees compared to 2018, paying VND 21,522 billion to the state budget (an increase of more than 23% compared to 2017).

Every year, the number of enterprises registered for establishment gradually increases and has the largest growth rate in the period of 2015-2016 is more than 30%, but in the period of 2018-present, the rate has decreased significantly, due to the influence of world and domestic economic development on the development of the number of enterprises of Hanoi City. The number of dissolved enterprises accounted for about 5% of the number of newly established enterprises and also tended to gradually increase in the period 2017-2019, due to fierce competition from business lines and sectors of the economy. This shows that the city has been building many breakthrough solutions to contribute to improving the business investment environment, creating favorable conditions for businesses in the area. Specifically, in 2017, Hanoi city officially opened the Startup Ecosystem Portal. In 2018, the city issued the Startup Support Project, and implemented many policies to support the startup community and businesses in the capital such as: Supporting and encouraging newly established businesses; Supporting businesses to access credit capital and banks; Support human resource training for businesses in the area; Support for production premises; Support for science and technology; Organizing many events to connect supply and demand, linking regions; Organize investment and trade promotion programs to introduce products at domestic and international conferences; Supporting businesses to directly participate in foreign distribution networks.

Annually, the number of operating enterprises as of December 31 every year gradually increases and has the largest growth rate in the period 2016-2017 with more than 20%, by December 31, 2019, there were 155,940 enterprises in Hanoi city. The number of SMEs according to the General Statistics Office as of December 31, 2019 is 152,370 enterprises, accounting for 97.71% of the total number of enterprises in Hanoi city, which is also the general situation of characteristics of all types of enterprises across the country. This shows that SMEs in Hanoi city currently account for a very large number, playing an important role in the socio-economic development of Hanoi City. The increase in the number of enterprises also shows certain difficulties, but the City and Central People's Committees adjust regulations and processes related to production - business and investment procedures in the direction of openness, ventilation, increasing efficiency and more synchronization. At the same time, adjust the mechanism to more effectively use enterprise support funds, development investment support funds, etc. The city has built a group of solutions to invite the cooperation and support of large enterprises and economic groups in supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in the

direction of mutual benefit of parties in investment, production and business cooperation. The Department of Planning and Investment will also continue to reform administrative procedures so that people and businesses are more satisfied when carrying out business and investment procedures; strengthen coordination with relevant units to implement trade, investment, business promotion programs, support enterprises to connect supply and demand, etc. in order to support policies for businesses to meet the needs to promote the highest development potential of this business community.

The structure of SMEs is divided into 3 main industries of the economy: (1) Agriculture, forestry and fisheries; (2) Industry and construction; (3) Services. In which, the agriculture, forestry and fishery sector in 2015 had 1967 enterprises and tended to decrease to only 1807 enterprises by 2019; the industry and construction industry in 2015 had 14,865 enterprises and tended to gradually increase to 21,967 enterprises by 2019. ; the service industry has the largest number of enterprises, in 2015 there were 83,275 enterprises and by 2019 there were 124,600 enterprises, accounting for 84.13% of the total number of enterprises in the EET area in Hanoi city. For agriculture, forestry and fisheries, due to trade conflicts in the world, climate change and epidemics are directly affecting the production and export of agricultural, forestry and fishery products of Vietnam in general and Hanoi city in particular, the development situation has declined. However, this is an opportunity to continue the structure of the value chain and innovate the growth model. For the service industry, this is the most developed industry thanks to its potential, high knowledge and technology content such as finance and banking,... The government has also issued many policies to actively support SMEs to develop strongly, creating a favorable, equal and transparent business environment. However, there are still some limitations and solutions need to be overcome, such as: SMEs need to have a development strategy through specific plans, strategies, visions, and operational missions, the solution is also applied to SMEs, which is to build a vision in the development of their SMEs by clearly identifying economic problems, customers, competition, future orientation, prospects of SMEs, high specialization in customer contact, prestige, brand and core values that each SME provides to the market and society...

Relevant Studies

Some of the studies related to knowledge sharing and transfer within organizations are summarized in the following table.

Author(s)	Research Findings	Research Method	Influential Factors
Gruber & Duxbury (2001)	Studied the relationship between corporate culture and knowledge sharing in R&D departments of high-tech firms.	Qualitative interviews, sample size of 30 participants.	Reward structure, openness, supportive sharing, trust, leadership support.
Al-Alawi et al. (2007)	Corporate culture plays an important role in the accumulation and dissemination of organizational knowledge.	Quantitative survey in Bahrain.	Trust, communication, information systems, rewards, organizational structure.
Islam et al. (2011)	Corporate culture affects knowledge sharing in	Quantitative survey in	Trust, internal communication,

	service organizations.	Bangladesh.	leadership.
Mueller (2013)	Culture influences knowledge sharing between project teams.	Survey of 113 technical staff in Europe.	Leadership, time, cost, result orientation, employees.
De Long & Fahey (2000)	Identified four ways corporate culture influences knowledge-sharing behaviors.	Document analysis combined with expert interviews.	Cultural norms, trust, reward systems, leadership style.
Zheng et al. (2010)	Corporate culture indirectly affects organizational performance through knowledge sharing.	Quantitative survey of 301 organizations in China.	Knowledge-sharing culture structure, leadership commitment, interdepartmental trust.

Table 1. Relevant Studies

Hypothesis and Proposed Research Model

Based on theoretical analysis and literature review, Mueller's (2013) research model is considered to be comprehensive and full of core aspects of corporate culture that influence knowledge sharing behavior, which has been mentioned in many previous works. Although Mueller's research focuses primarily on the context of knowledge sharing within working groups, the elements of the model can still be extended to explain the phenomenon of knowledge sharing between individuals throughout the organization. Because, the interaction between groups is actually the result of interaction between individuals of different groups. Therefore, this study chooses Mueller's (2013) model as the theoretical basis to analyze corporate culture factors affecting knowledge sharing behavior among employees in small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector in Vietnam.

Specifically, the model proposed in the current study includes 3 expressions and 6 corporate culture values, corresponding to 9 main factors:

Leadership: The process of influencing to guide members of an organization to achieve a common goal (Jong & Hartog, 2007). Leaders play a central role in promoting and shaping a culture of knowledge sharing (Kreiner, 2002; Islam et al., 2011).

Hypothesis H1: Leadership has a positive influence on knowledge sharing behavior in small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector.

Time dedication: Knowledge sharing often requires a lot of time to find, access, and communicate knowledge effectively (Oliver & Kandadi, 2006; Cantú et al., 2009).

Hypothesis H2: Dedication of time has a positive effect on knowledge-sharing behavior.

Organizational Structure: A simple, low-level organizational structure will encourage a more efficient flow of information and knowledge (Galbraith, 1971; Mueller, 2012b).

Hypothesis H3: Simple organizational structure has a positive effect on knowledge sharing.

Openness: Openness makes it easy for organizations to receive new ideas, facilitating the exchange and circulation of knowledge (Day, 1994; Mueller, 2013). **Hypothesis H4:** Openness has a positive effect on knowledge sharing.

Learning Orientation: Learning-oriented organizations often encourage employees to explore, create, and share solutions (Ames & Archer, 1988; Baker & Sinkula, 1999; Brachos et al., 2007). Hypothesis H5: Learning orientation has a positive effect on knowledge sharing.

Team Orientation: Teamwork promotes collaboration, information exchange, and mutual support (Alavi et al., 2005; Mueller, 2013). Hypothesis H6: Group orientation has a positive effect on knowledge sharing.

Growth Orientation: While rapid development helps to take advantage of knowledge, high growth rates sometimes hinder the process of accumulating and sharing knowledge due to a lack of cohesion (Brown et al., 2001; Dwyer et al., 2003; Gruenfeld & Fan, 1999). Hypothesis H7: Development orientation has a negative effect on knowledge sharing.

Output Orientation: Focusing on outputs can motivate employees to share knowledge to improve work efficiency (Mueller, 2012b). Hypothesis H8: Output orientation has a positive effect on knowledge sharing.

Employee Orientation: The interest and investment in employee development creates a favorable environment for knowledge sharing through training, development and corporate culture building activities (Collins & Smith, 2006; von Krogh, 1998).

Hypothesis H9: Employee orientation has a positive effect on knowledge sharing.

In addition to cultural factors, the study also adds control variables related to demographic and organizational characteristics such as gender, age, education, work experience, rank, size, and field of activity. This addition aims to test the differences in knowledge sharing behavior according to the foundational characteristics, and is a significant extension of the original model of Mueller (2013).

Research Methods

Scale Construction and Adjustment

The research scale is developed on the basis of synthesizing similar research works and specialized theories that have been published, with special priority given to updated research in the last 5 years. This process follows typical steps as instructed by Hair et al. (2014): preliminary scale initialization, formal value validation, semantic correction, and statistical validation. Specifically, the initial observed variables are determined from the reference and theoretical model; then conduct qualitative research (group discussion, expert interview) to review the content, ensure the validity of the form of the question items. The results from this step help to adjust the language, add or subtract or restructure variables according to the expert's suggestions. The initial correction scale is then tested on a small sample (pilot survey) to assess clarity and operability, before implementing a formal survey.

Group the Scale into Elements

After the preliminary survey data is collected, the scale is factorially analyzed to determine the structure of the underlying components. The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) step is applied to group the observed variables into factors (factors) in a logical way. The extraction criteria include eigenvalue greater than 1, and keep variables with a factor loading factor of ≥ 0.5 to ensure statistical and practical significance. The EFA analysis sample was also tested for conformity by KMO index (>0.5) and statistically significant Bartlett test ($\text{Sig} < 0.05$). After determining the number of factors, the observed variables are grouped into corresponding groups

based on content relevance. Next, Affirmative Factor Analysis (CFA) is used to test the stability scale structure and general fit of the model (e.g., Chi-square/df, GFI, CFI, RMSEA parameters). The results of the analysis confirm the final factor structure and reliability of each component.

Implement the Survey

The survey is conducted using a questionnaire structured on the Likert scale (usually 5 levels from “completely disagree” to “completely agree”). The survey can be broadcast live at the study sites or sent online to the study subjects. The survey implementation time is clearly stated and takes place under stable conditions. The *survey sample size* includes the number of votes distributed and collected; in which, only valid (fully filled and valid) forms are taken into account in the analysis. This illustrates how direct survey questionnaires are collected, the number and response rate in the actual study.

Data Processing

The entire collected data is initially processed by cleaning (removing missing or extraneous observations) and encoding the answers into numerical values. The information is entered into the analysis software for encoding and analysis. This process includes double-checking the answers, normalizing variables (if necessary), and ensuring consistency in the data. At the same time, Cronbach’s α reliability analysis was performed on the observation variable set of each scale to assess the internal consistency. Unsatisfactory variables will be considered for elimination before conducting further analysis.

Statistical Analysis

After the data is clean and the scale is finalized, many statistical methods are applied to analyze the survey results:

Descriptive statistics: Calculation of averages, standard deviations, distribution of answers for each item and each scale.

Reliability Testing (Cronbach’s α): Evaluate the stability and consistency of the scale; A value $\alpha \geq 0.7$ is generally considered acceptable.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Affirmative (CFA): Identifies and validates the factor structure of scales (parameters such as eigenvalue, load factor, vote correlation factor, model fit indicators).

Inferential statistical analysis: Depending on the research objectives, other tests such as Pearson correlation analysis, multivariate regression analysis, ANOVA analysis, or EQC Model (SEM) can be applied to test the relationship between variables and research hypotheses.

The above steps are performed sequentially and repeated as necessary (e.g., further calibration of scales after EFA, CFA) to ensure that the results of the study are highly reliable and scientifically valuable.

Research Results

Evaluate the Reliability of the Scale and Factor Analysis

Evaluation of the Reliability of the Scale

Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient is used to eliminate non-standard variables. Only 2 variables were eliminated including 1 variable of Time Dedication (T4) and 1 variable of Openness (O1) due

to the variable-sum correlation coefficient < 0.3 . The rest of the factor groups all have a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient > 0.7 , demonstrating that the reliability of the scales is satisfactory and eligible for further exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The results of EFA analysis using the Principal Axis Factoring extraction method and the Varimax rotation showed that the indices reached the acceptable level: $KMO = 0.812 > 0.5$, Bartlett test with $Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05$, total variance of 61.4%. After EFA, the variables retain with a factor load > 0.5 . The groups of elements retain much of the original structure. For example, the Learning Orientation group retains the same 5 variables; group Organizational structure type 1 variable (OS3), the rest remain the same.

Correlation Analysis and Regression Analysis

Correlation and Regression Analysis

The results of the Pearson test show that most independent variables have a positive correlation with the "knowledge sharing" dependent variable at a statistical significance level of 1% ($Sig. < 0.01$). This suggests that variables can be included in multiple linear regression analysis to test the degree of influence.

The regression analysis was performed by the Enter method. The test result F in the ANOVA analysis table has a value of $Sig. = 0.000$, indicating that the regression model is consistent with the survey dataset. The corrected R^2 coefficient reached 0.473, indicating that independent variables explained 47.3% of the variation in knowledge sharing behavior.

Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	Regression	Sig.	VIF	Conclusion
Leadership	0.182		0.002	1.384	Accepted
Organizational Structure	0.241		0.000	1.527	Accepted
Openness	0.210		0.006	1.312	Accepted
Learning Orientation	0.298		0.000	1.457	Accepted
Team Orientation	0.165		0.011	1.236	Accepted
Employee Orientation	0.124		0.029	1.410	Accepted
Outcome Orientation	0.091		0.084	1.288	Rejected
Time Commitment	0.056		0.121	1.303	Rejected
Development Orientation	-0.032		0.217	1.367	Rejected

Table 2. Detailed Regression Results

All the variance magnification factors (VIFs) are less than 2, confirming that there is no multicollinear phenomenon in the model.

Hypothesis Testing

Based on the results of the regression analysis, there are 6 hypotheses accepted with statistical significance, including:

H1: Leadership has a positive influence on knowledge sharing.

H3: Simple organizational structure promotes knowledge sharing.

H4: Openness facilitates knowledge sharing.

H5: Learning orientation is an important factor in encouraging knowledge sharing.

H6: Orient the group to actively contribute to knowledge sharing.

H9: Orient employees to have a positive relationship with knowledge sharing.

The three hypotheses that were rejected include:

H2: The dedication of time has no obvious effect.

H7: The development orientation does not show a significant impact.

H8: The output orientation is not statistically significant.

Discuss Research Results

The results of the study shed light on the role of corporate culture factors in promoting knowledge-sharing behaviour in SMEs (SMEs, private sector) in Viet Nam. Of the nine hypotheses tested, six were accepted, suggesting that the positive influence of these factors was significant.

Notably, “**Learning Orientation**” has the highest regression coefficient (Beta = 0.298, Sig. < 0.001), affirming that when the organization encourages continuous learning and professional capacity development, employees will tend to share more knowledge. This result is consistent with previous studies such as those of Bock et al. (2005) and Wang & Noe (2010), which emphasized the relationship between learning culture and knowledge sharing.

This is followed by “**Organizational Structure**” and “**Openness**”, with coefficients of 0.241 and 0.210, respectively. A simple, less hierarchical organizational structure helps the flow of information flow easily, and an open working environment increases trust among members – these two factors contribute positively to knowledge sharing behavior. This is in line with Kim & Lee’s (2006) view of the role of organizational structures in knowledge management.

The leadership factor (Beta = 0.182) was also confirmed to have a positive influence, showing that the role of the leader in orienting, encouraging and setting an example is one of the driving forces for knowledge sharing within the enterprise. This is especially important in the context of small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector. where leadership is often highly personalized.

In addition, “**Team Orientation**” and “**Employee Orientation**” also showed a moderate positive impact. This shows that when the organization emphasizes the role of teamwork and cares about the needs of personal development, employees will feel more secure and proactive in sharing knowledge.

In contrast, factors such as “**Time Dedication**”, “**Output Orientation**” and “**Development Orientation**” do not show a statistically significant association. It can be explained that in the small and medium-sized business environment of the private sector – where resources and time are often limited – employees may prioritize direct work that delivers concrete results over knowledge sharing activities, which are long-term. This also shows that the design of

knowledge-sharing mechanisms needs to be tied to specific rewards and suitable for practical contexts.

Overall, the results of the study show that knowledge sharing in businesses does not only depend on individual factors but is strongly influenced by the corporate cultural context. Businesses need to build a working environment that encourages learning, trust, and collaboration to promote knowledge sharing in a sustainable way.

Comparing the results of this study with that of Mueller (2013)

The results of this study have many similarities and also some notable differences compared to Mueller's (2013) study – a prominent work that studies the relationship between corporate culture and knowledge sharing behavior in the context of European businesses.

Similarities:

Both studies show that **learning orientation** is a factor that has a strong influence on employees' knowledge-sharing behavior. Mueller (2013) emphasizes that a culture of learning promotes the active search and exchange of knowledge, especially in organizations with a high level of complexity. This is fully consistent with the results of the current study when learning orientation is the factor with the highest influence coefficient in the regression model.

In addition, Mueller's research also affirms the positive role of **decentralized organizational structure** and open work environment – corresponding to the simple **organizational structure** and **openness** factors in the current study. Both studies show that organizations that have a flexible structure and encourage the exchange of ideas are more likely to create knowledge flows.

Different:

One notable difference is the **leadership** factor. In Mueller's (2013) study, the role of leadership is said to be **neutral**, that is, there is no obvious statistical effect on knowledge sharing behavior. Meanwhile, current research shows that **leadership has a positive influence**, which reflects the characteristics of corporate culture in small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector, where leadership is clearly directing and oriented, sometimes "patriarchal". so the words and behavior of leaders have a strong influence on employees.

In addition, Mueller (2013) found that performance orientation can promote knowledge sharing through healthy competition. However, in this study, **the output orientation was not statistically significant**, showing that in the context of small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector, emphasizing results may make employees hesitant to share for fear of losing their personal advantage or decreasing their personal performance by comparison.

The similarities between the two studies confirm that some universal factors such as learning orientation or simple organizational structure play a role in promoting knowledge sharing. However, the differences – particularly in the role of leadership and the effectiveness of output – show the strong influence of **local cultural and organizational contexts**. This underscores the importance of designing policies and governance environments that are appropriate to the organizational characteristics of each country.

Recommendations

Based on the research results, in order to promote knowledge sharing behavior in small and

medium-sized enterprises (SMEs in the private sector) in Vietnam, there needs to be clear directions for improvement in terms of corporate culture. First of all, businesses should prioritize building and maintaining a culture of active learning, because this is the factor that has the strongest influence on knowledge sharing behavior. Specifically, it is necessary to create conditions for employees to participate in training programs, encourage learning from mistakes, and integrate learning activities into the evaluation and reward mechanism to create internal motivation.

In addition, the organizational structure should be designed in a lean and decentralized direction to reduce barriers in the internal flow of information. The formation of interdepartmental working groups also contributes to the promotion of knowledge exchange between departments. At the same time, businesses need to build an open working environment where employees are encouraged to express their opinions and give honest feedback and have an internal technology system to support effective information storage and sharing.

Another key point is leadership. In the context of small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector in Vietnam, leaders have a significant influence on employee behavior, so businesses need to develop a team of leaders who inspire, listen and lead by example in sharing knowledge. In addition, the promotion of both team orientation and employee orientation should also be emphasized. Businesses should organize group learning activities, and at the same time build a personal career development roadmap associated with continuous sharing and learning activities.

Finally, the performance management policy needs to be reconsidered. Since factors such as output orientation or time dedication do not have a significant impact on knowledge sharing behavior, performance management should be tailored to encourage collaboration and sharing rather than focusing solely on individual outcomes. Methods of evaluating team performance, 360-degree feedback, or reward and punishment mechanisms associated with sharing behavior can be applied to create a sustainable knowledge ecosystem within the organization.

Conclusion

This study has contributed to clarifying the relationship between corporate culture factors and knowledge-sharing behavior of employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs, private sector). Through quantitative surveys and regression analysis, the results show that factors such as learning orientation, simple organizational structure, openness, inspirational leadership, team orientation, and employee orientation have a positive and statistically significant effect on knowledge sharing behavior. In particular, learning orientation is identified as the most influential factor, emphasizing the role of learning and developing internal capacity in promoting the flow of knowledge within the organization.

In contrast, factors such as time dedication, output orientation and development orientation did not show a significant impact in the context of the study. This reflects the specificity of small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector in Vietnam, where limited resources and performance pressures can cause employees to prioritize personal goals over knowledge sharing activities that are long-term and rarely see immediate results.

From the findings of the study, it can be affirmed that corporate culture plays a central role in shaping and maintaining knowledge sharing behavior in enterprises. Investing in developing a working, learning, open and active leadership environment will create an important foundation for the spread of knowledge – a core factor to help small and medium-sized enterprises in the

private sector improve their competitiveness and adapt in a volatile business environment.

However, the study still has some limitations such as the scope of the survey is mainly concentrated in some urban areas, which does not fully reflect the characteristics of all small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector across the country. Therefore, further studies can expand the geographical scope, combine qualitative methods and exploit more factors such as organizational trust, intrinsic motivation or reward and punishment policies to have a more comprehensive view of the mechanism for promoting knowledge sharing in organizations.

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