

# The Role of Trust and Team Culture in Knowledge Sharing and OCBs among Government Officials

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**ABSTRACT---** *To date, numerous empirical studies have been confirmed the key roles of knowledge sharing and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) toward organizational performance. Thus, this study attempts to investigate determinants of knowledge sharing, and OCBs in government officials, which can improve organizational performance based on voluntary behaviors. Given this purpose of the study, the data collected from a sample of 250 government officials from An Nhon village, Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam. This research adopts a cross-sectional study design and utilizes partial least square – structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) technique through Smart-PLS software. The findings indicate that trust and team culture are determinants that positively and directly influences knowledge sharing and OCBs. This research contributes to the knowledge sharing and OCBs literature, and provides practical implications for public sectors. Managers should generate practices that help organizations enhance trust and team culture among officials, which lead to higher knowledge sharing and OCBs.*

**Keywords---** trust, team culture, knowledge sharing, OCBs.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Government officers play an important role in connecting relationships as well as transferring information between government and citizens [1]. Officer attitudes usually affect efficiency of information transfer, which are concerned by many scholars in organizational behavior. Volunteer behaviors (e.g., knowledge sharing, organizational citizenship behavior) are required from government officials to gain performance productivity in public sectors [2].

The role of trust in promoting volunteer behaviors has received considerable attention recently [3, 4]. Previous scholars have identified a significant impact of trust on knowledge sharing behaviors [5], organizational citizenship behaviors – OCBs [6], employee voluntary performance [7]. Current stream of organizational studies recognize trust as a strong enabler of knowledge sharing which further improve team mutual understanding and problem solving experiences [4]. Also, in the context of social exchange, trust plays a key role in enhancing OCBs [8].

Moreover, numerous researches found effect of individuals' personal values on volunteer behaviors [9]. Team members in high pleasure of helping others are available for voluntarily sharing their knowledge and supporting colleagues [10]. Thus, team culture (e.g. enjoy helping) as an element of one's values affects employee's knowledge sharing behaviors [11] and OCBs [12].

Although previous research assess the correlation among trust, team culture, knowledge sharing, and OCBs (e.g., [4, 12, 13]), the empirical findings for public organizational context are still limited. With the growth of internet, government officials easily access to information through various means of communications [14, 15]. However, internet environment also contains many risks and challenges for knowledge sharing and OCBs due to information safety [16]. Whether increasing trust and team culture may lead to higher level of knowledge sharing and OCBs among government officials? This research therefore attempts to bridge this gap, and extends the cope of similar studies through conducting in Vietnam – one of the most dynamic countries in ASEAN.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1. Trust, Knowledge Sharing, and OCBs

Trust has been defined as “the level of confidence that one individual has in another to act in a fair, ethical, predictable manner” [17, p.165]. In a group context, trust refers to the level of confidence of team members to one another [18]. Trust

are constructed into two types: emotional and cognitive trust [19, 20]. The emotional content of trust involves a positive affect of self-trust as well as other-trust, whereas the cognitive content of trust concerns “a good rational reasons” for the object of trust [20, 21]. Two components of trust influence the trust process, and generate the strong relationship between trustor and object of trust.

Hu *et al.* [22] describe knowledge sharing is behaviors involving transferring or popularize knowledge from one individual to another. The process of knowledge sharing depends on effectiveness of communication among team members, which can lead to higher team performance [23]. Trust amongst group members may improve effective communication within team [4]. Even face-to-face or virtual environment, trust encourages employees to be pleasure to open themselves to each other and transfer knowledge [4, 13]. Trust with two components facilitates knowledge sharing process: (1) confidence on one’s willingness to share (emotional); (2) believe in one’s competence to transfer (cognitive) [5]. Thus, trust plays a key determinant in leading knowledge sharing amongst team members.

OCBs refer to employee’s extra-role behaviors that are discretionary, not directly rewarded or punished by formal reward system [24, 25, 26]. Podsakoff *et al.* [25] provided a multi-dimensional scale of OCBs. The seven dimensions are: (1) Helping Behavior, (2) Sportsmanship, (3) Organizational Loyalty, (4) Organizational Compliance, (5) Individual Initiative, (6) Civic Virtue, and (7) Self Development. These behaviors can target to organizations (OCB-O), colleagues (OCB-I), or customers (OCB-C) [27]. Based on Social Exchange Theory, OCBs are regards as a type of reciprocity of positive social exchanges inside organization (e.g., [27, 28]. When employees trust in organizational management system and coworkers, they are willing to engage in OCBs; then they can get reciprocally a positive feedbacks and “trusted” feeling from organization and colleagues [27, 29]. Thus, trust is one of essential foundation for social relations and enhance OCBs.

Therefore, I propose that:

H1: Trust can positively influence knowledge sharing.

H2: Trust can positively influence OCBs

## 2.2. Team Culture, Knowledge Sharing, and OCBs

Culture is defined as “the shared values, beliefs and practices of the people in the organization” [30, p. 77; 31]. Official team in an organization is gathered by cultural diversity of members [32]. According to Hu *et al.* [33], team culture consists of a set of rules, work expectations, cognition, and actions that team members develop, share and perform. A strong team culture with shared expectations and beliefs can facilitate member and team performance and communication that lead to an effective team [32].

Team culture can influence to when and how employees share knowledge within organization [34]. Asian economies with a collectivist orientation does play an important role in developing team culture [35]. Collectivism culture encourage socialization among team members [36] that lead to development of trust, corporation, and friendly environment which enhance knowledge sharing and OCBs [34, 36, 37]. Knowledge sharing is more popular in organization with knowledge sharing-culture: members share ideas and insights naturally, not forced to do so [30]. Moreover, collective team members engage more in interpersonal helping and extra-role behaviors (i.e. OCBs) due to avoiding team criticism [36, 38].

Therefore, I propose that:

H3: Team culture can positively influence knowledge sharing.

H4: Team culture positively influence OCBs

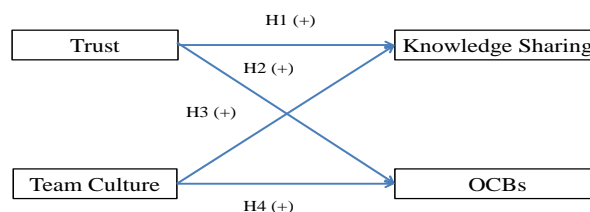


Fig 1. Theoretical Framework

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Sample and Procedure

Questionnaire data were collected of 250 government officials at An Nhon village, Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam. In 2020, Public Administration Reform Index of Binh Dinh, which was announced by the Ministry of Home Affairs, increased by 15 ranks compared to 2019. Thus, government officials in Binh Dinh may strongly emphasize on reforming administration procedure, sharing knowledge, and helping each other in extra- and intra-role tasks.

The survey questionnaire was sent directly to all departments at An Nhon village with cover letter which could explain research purpose and objective. After receiving approval of department leaders, survey questionnaires, which were sent to 310 officials, were collected by head of department. Total 250 responses were returned and found to be valid for the purpose of data analysis (response rate of 80.6%). Gender distribution of 250 participants explains 59 per cent (147) were male and the remaining 41 per cent (103) were female. According to the level of education, 48 per cent (120) of participants were found to be at university level. Demographic summary of the participants is presented in Table 1.

**Table I. Demographic Summary (N=250)**

Variables	Frequency (%)
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	147 (58.8)
Female	103 (41.2)
<i>Qualification</i>	
High school	5 (2.0)
College graduate	68 (27.2)
University graduate	120 (48.0)
Postgraduate	57 (22.8)
<i>Marital Status</i>	
Single	102 (40.8)
Married	148 (59.2)
<i>Age in Years</i>	
Under 30 years	67 (26.8)
30 ~ 40 years	89 (35.6)
41 ~ 50 years	50 (20.0)
50 years and above	44 (17.6)
<i>Tenure</i>	
Under 3 years	80 (32.0)
3 ~ 5 years	118 (47.2)
5 years and above	52 (20.8)

#### 3.2. Measure

The original survey was prepared in English, then the scales was translated into Vietnamese based on translation procedure of Brislin [39]. After asking 10 employees about item ambiguity, the final questionnaire were available for collecting data. The study constructs were operationalized using a multi-item scale consist of positive statements with a total of 31 items.

*Trust.* Trust was measured by the 10-item scale derived from Mayer *et al.* [40]. Examples of these items included: “My organization is genuine and sincere”; “My organization would keep its commitment”. Government officers responded on the 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

*Team culture.* A 5-point, four-item scale measuring team culture was adopted from Kelloway and Barling [41]. An example item is “I would feel comfortable walking up to anyone in my organization and starting a conversation”.

*Knowledge Sharing.* Respondents assessed knowledge sharing with nine items [41] on a 5-point Likert scale. Examples of these items included: “My organization is genuine and sincere”; “My organization would keep its commitment”.

*OCBs.* OCBs were measured using a eight-item scale developed by Organ [26]. In this study, OCBs only referred to behaviors target to individuals [26]. An example item is “I am willing to help co-workers when they are absent”.

### 3.3. Data Analysis Method

The current study was utilized the technique of partial least square – structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) through using Smart-PLS software (version 3). This software employs the algorithm that regresses partial relationships by using separate ordinary least squares regression [42]. PLS-SEM is not restricted to normally distributed assumptions and applied to both large and small sample [43].

### 3.4. Measurement Model

Before analyzing structural model, the test of reliability and validity was conducted based on values of factor loadings, Cronbach’s Alpha, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity (DV). As shown in Table II, there are two items of trust scale and one item of knowledge sharing scale deleted because of lower loading value of 0.60 [44]. The value of Cronbach’s alpha for all constructs are higher than 0.70 indicating good internal consistency and strong reliability [42]. The CR values of four constructs are above the acceptable threshold value of 0.70 as recommended by [42]. The reported AVE exceeded the recommended value of 0.50 by [42]. Finally, the computation of DV in Table III ranged from 0.245 to , lower than acceptable value of 0.85 by [42].

**Table II. Construct reliability and validity**

Variables	Loadings	Cronbach’s Alpha	CR	AVE
Trust	0.873~0.887	0.942	0.954	0.776
Team Culture	0.711~0.875	0.828	0.883	0.654
Knowledge Sharing	0.737~0.840	0.806	0.873	0.632
OCBs	0.882~0.887	0.845	0.890	0.618

**Table III. Discriminant validity**

	Trust	Team Culture	Knowledge Sharing	OCBs
Trust	0.795			
Team Culture	0.558	0.801		
Knowledge Sharing	0.681	0.566	0.786	
OCBs	0.467	0.245	0.578	0.809

## 4. RESULTS

The bootstrap technique was conducted to analyze the significance of path coefficients. Table IV exhibited the results of hypothesis testing. Test of significance revealed that trust had strong influence on OCBs ( $\beta = 0.567$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and knowledge sharing ( $\beta = 0.559$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, H1 and H2 were supported. Moreover, the direct relationships of team culture toward to knowledge sharing ( $\beta = 0.171$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and OCBs ( $\beta = 0.181$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) were found to be statistically significant. Hence, H3 and H4 were supported. In sum, the models explain the variance of 34.0 per cent for knowledge sharing and 35.2 per cent for OCBs, which met the requirements suggested by Hair *et al.* [42].

**Table IV. Hypothesis testing**

	Path coefficients	t- Statistics	p values	Accept/ Reject
H1: Trust → Knowledge sharing	0.559	12.698	0.000	Accepted
H2: Trust → OCBs	0.567	13.657	0.000	Accepted
H3: Team culture → Knowledge sharing	0.171	3.779	0.000	Accepted
H4: Team culture → OCBs	0.181	4.033	0.000	Accepted

## 5. DISCUSSION

The current study discovers the influence of trust and team culture on knowledge sharing and OCBs. This research shows significantly positive relationship between trust toward knowledge sharing and OCBs, which are supported by previous findings (e.g. [4, 27]). Moreover, the results of this study supports findings of Jamshed and Majeed [37]'s study that conclude that team culture is positively related to knowledge sharing. In addition, team culture positively influence OCBs of government officials, which endorses the arguments of previous studies (e.g. [36]).

These findings also generate the framework of knowledge sharing and OCBs that are considered as voluntary behaviors, which can highly influence job performance (e.g., [45, 46]). Trust enables team members to reduce barriers in sharing knowledge, and encourage them to help co-workers voluntarily. Mutual trust among team members also contribute to readiness of voluntary behaviors. Moreover, culture of team spreads and praise the voluntary behaviors (i.e., knowledge sharing and OCBs) based on members' recognition.

Managers can utilize practices that encourage trust and team culture among team members in order to enhance knowledge sharing and OCBs. In terms of trust, managers should empower team members and motivate them to devote to team responsibility. Also, managers should keep the promises and match words with actions. Diffuse regulations and shared rules can guarantee the trust and team culture. Moreover, developing a helping environment among employees generates strong team culture that improve and enhance OCBs.

### *Limitation and future recommendation*

First, the data collection was confined to respondents from government officials at Binh Dinh province. Future study should attempt to collect larger sample size in different cities and provinces in Vietnam, which might conduct a comparative research. Second, this study concentrates on the direct relationships between trust and team culture toward knowledge sharing and OCBs. Therefore, future research could analyze the mediating and moderating effects that can influence to these direct correlations. Finally, using cross-sectional time frame may influence to the results when time flies, thus, a longitudinal study may support to better understand the causal relationships.

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