

The Mediating Role of Trust and Organizational Commitment in the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management and Knowledge Sharing

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research project was to investigate the impact of Strategic Human Resource Management practices on knowledge sharing behavior among university faculty members. This research also studied the mediating role of trust and organizational commitment in the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior. Following the positivist paradigm, this research adopted the quantitative research strategy and collected the data from 700 faculty members of leading universities (top ranked by Higher Education Commission) of Pakistan through a self-administered questionnaire. Bi-variate and multi-variate quantitative analyses were used to test the hypothesis and achieve the research objectives. Structural Equation Modeling through Smart Partial Least Square was used to test the entire key hypothesis. The findings revealed that SHRM practices are vital in creating knowledge sharing behavior among faculty members, organizational commitment partially mediates the relationship among the aforementioned variables, while trust completely mediates the relationship between HR practices and knowledge sharing behavior. Thus, this study provides sufficient guidelines for HR policymakers and administration of public universities on how to make faculty members more committed to their institution and to develop the culture of knowledge sharing by adopting SHRM practices, while helping employees to have socio-emotional relationships so that trust can be developed among them.

Keywords

Knowledge sharing behavior; Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM Practices); Trust; Organizational commitment; Higher education.

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1. Introduction

Organizational knowledge plays a pivotal role in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage by a firm in the new economy (Birkinshaw & Sheehan, 2002; Davenport et al., 1998; Hansen et al., 1999; Miles et al., 1997; Teece, 2000). There has been supporting evidence that Knowledge Management can directly lead to improved firms performance (see Zack, 1999). Robinson et al. (2004) argue that knowledge management provides a firm with both strategic and operational benefits. Knowledge assets that are mostly intangible in nature represent a significant proportion of the market value of some organizations (Tiwana, 2000) and are subject to imperfect imitation through its tacit dimensions (Polanyi, 1966; Hall & Sapsed, 2005). In the 21st century, knowledge is the source of organizational success, especially in the context of universities where knowledge sharing is highly necessary because sometimes individuals are unable to conceive as well as executing an idea. In such situations, they need organizational support. More specifically, employees in universities are supposed to share knowledge/ideas with top-level management or with colleagues so that they can collaborate and execute.

The role of Knowledge Management (hence KM) is to facilitate, unlock, co-ordinate, and leverage knowledge, whether tacit, individual, or external, so that it becomes available as an organizational asset (Robinson et al., 2004.) In today's business world, business leaders have to be innovative to capture the collective wisdom of their employees, customers, and shareholders (Parent et al., 2000), either from inside the firm or from outside. Practitioners have realized that people and the culture of the workplace are the key drivers to ultimately determine the success or failure of KM (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). This is further complicated by the characteristics of knowledge that has several dimensions, i.e. individual or group knowledge, internal or external knowledge, and tacit or explicit knowledge (Al-Ghassani et al., 2002).

One of the basic elements of knowledge management process is knowledge sharing. Organizations need to create an environment in which employees should trust each other and can easily share knowledge with each other. This element of distrust and knowledge hiding is very common among faculty members of universities and

researchers, as they believe that others may misuse the knowledge they have shared. Another reason could be that they believe when the knowledge is shared, it becomes a public property and the individual's own competitive edge is no longer available. Universities need to create a culture of trust that will lead to building trust and relationship among faculty members of the university. The second most important factor that can lead to the development of knowledge sharing behavior is faculty's commitment to the university. If the faculty members are committed and loyal to the university, instead of achieving their own accomplishments, they will be more prone to sharing knowledge with other colleagues.

1.1. Objective of this Research

Based on foregoing discussion on the importance of SHRM practices, commitment, and trust in knowledge sharing behavior of the university faculty members, this research investigated the mediating mechanism of trust and commitment in the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior of university faculty members. The main purpose of this study was to study the influence of SHRM practices on knowledge sharing behavior. SHRM practices influence employee's behavior, especially when it comes to knowledge sharing. Employee's commitment plays an important role in developing knowledge sharing behavior in individuals within organizational setting, so this research investigates the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior. Employees only share knowledge with their fellows whom they trust. Therefore, the element of trust has a vital role in creating knowledge sharing culture in organizations. This research also studied the mediating effect of trust in the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior, because knowledge sharing behavior can only be triggered if an organization has a culture of trust.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. SHRM Practices and Knowledge Sharing Behavior

Knowledge sharing at organization helps improve effectiveness and efficiency. Employees are required to engage in knowledge sharing activities for the sake of organizational benefits, but most of the times

individuals do not share knowledge and they present some personal justifications for it. These justifications include a fear of losing status or power and lack of trust in their colleagues. The organizational settings that reward individual performance rather than group or team performance could be another reason. Individuals feel ownership of their knowledge, as they have constant control over it. They are not willing to share the ownership of knowledge with others because they think that they will lose control on their knowledge if they share it with others (Pierce et al., 2003). Since knowledge is acquired, controlled or created by them, individuals feel that knowledge is their personal psychological property, and subsequently want to withhold it (Brown & Robinson, 2007; Webster et al., 2008).

Human resource management research is expanding in diverse dimensions; managing employee's interpersonal relationships is one of the aspects of human resource management research. There are several models that explain the mechanism of managing employees' relationships, where transaction-based perspective and high involvement HRM practices are the major standpoints (Agarwala, 2003; Arthur, 1994; Collins & Smith, 2006; Porter & Hite, 1995). Transaction-based perspective highlights a short-term exchange relationship among organizational members, while long-term exchange relationship among organization members, on the other hand, is highlighted by high involvement HR practices and is known as innovative perspective. Previous studies have found that high involvement HRM practices have a significant positive relationship with knowledge sharing process as compared to transaction-based perspective, and it is found to include the following combination: training and development, recruitment and selection, compensation practices, performance appraisals, etc. (Arthur, 1994; Collins & Smith, 2006; Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Delery & Doty, 1996; Paré & Tremblay, 2007; Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997; Youndt, Snell, Dean, & Lepak, 1996). Based on what we said, the first hypothesis of this study was set as follows:

H1: SHRM practices positively affect knowledge sharing behavior.

2.2. SHRM Practices and Organizational Commitment

In organizations, SHRM practices like recruitment and selection,

training and development, and compensation and rewards are the main activities of HR staff. These practices help the HR staff to hire the right quality and quantity of employees, provide proper training when and where it is needed, provides them with different compensation and reward packages according to their abilities, skills, knowledge, and performance. The recruitment and selection of employees through proper channel as well as extensive and intensive training motivates the employees on the one hand, and on the other hand, it helps the organizations to achieve their general organizational goals. Encouraging employees to engage in active participation to solve problems and tolerate ambiguity is another way to engage the individuals in organizations. The implementation of a proper performance management system and the provision of incentives and compensation packages according to their performance lead the employees to stay longer in the organization (Jackson, Schuler, & Jiang, 2014). Thus, the second hypothesis of this study was formulated as follows.

H2: *SHRM practices positively affect Organizational Commitment.*

2.3. Organizational Commitment and Knowledge Sharing Behavior

Organizational commitment is an individual's involvement in a particular organization, his/her identification with that organization, and finally the level of loyalty that an individual shows towards his/her organization. One of the elements of commitment is the individual's feeling, emotions, and obligations towards its organizations. Individuals with higher emotional attachment prefer the organizational goals and achievements to their own achievements and desires, and they prefer to share their ideas and knowledge with other employees. This led us to the third hypothesis of this study.

H3: Organizational Commitment positively affects knowledge sharing behavior.

2.4. The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment in the Relationship between SHRM Practices and Knowledge Sharing Behavior

Certain human resource practices that enhance the performance of the organization are called Strategic Human Resource Management practices. This claim is now supported by a large body of research as

well as results of meta-analysis (Evans & Davis, 2005; Gittell et al., 2009). The phenomenon of SHRM describes that adopting a group of key human resource practices enhances the individual's commitment to their organization. The sense of commitment in employees ultimately urges them to share their knowledge with other co-workers. Once individuals start sharing knowledge, then it becomes much easier for organizations to create knowledge sharing atmosphere through which organizations can achieve sustainable performance that ultimately creates value for the organization (Gittell et al., 2009).

Current study focuses on the key human resource practices like training, employee participation, employment security, job description, performance-oriented appraisal, internal career opportunities, and profit sharing as the trigger to make employees more committed (Huselid, 1995). These practices are considered to help mature the sense of commitment in employees that ultimately urges them to share their knowledge with other co-workers. Some previous studies empirically proved that organizational commitment is an important mediator between knowledge sharing behavior and HRM practices, which in turn leads to firm innovative performance (Agarwala, 2003; Benkhoff, 1997; Thompson & Heron, 2006; Yeung & Berman, 1997). Then, the fourth hypothesis of this study was formulated as follows.

H4: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior.

2.5. SHRM Practices and Trust

Strategic Human Resource Management is a relatively a new field of research which brings transformation in the field of human resource management research. The new transformational concept has been playing a key role in the management research for the last three decades (Guest 1987; Boxall & Purcell 2011). The focal point of this new transformation is to create and develop an alliance of human resources to generate an environment of trust and mutual understanding that can prepare the employees to contribute to organizational wellbeing. Individual's trust can only be gained by the organizations if organizations put the system in place (Takeuchi et al., 2007), because when people see a system in place, they start trusting and start believing that they will get the fair treatment in all the

endeavors. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis of this study was formulated as follows.

H5: SHRM practices positively affect trust.

2. 6. Trust and Knowledge Sharing

There are some psychological factors that affect the knowledge sharing behavior of employees in an organization. Trust and individuals commitment to organization are the most important factor that top management must consider in addition to the application of appropriate HR practices (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005; Hislop, 2003; Svetlik, Stavrou-Costea, Jin Chang, Pao Yeh, & Yeh, 2007; Thompson & Heron, 2005). Therefore, in this study we analyze the role of trust in developing knowledge sharing behavior. Trust is necessary for encouraging employee's willingness and knowledge sharing behavior. Good relationship among employees and organizations are pertinent in the development of trust, which in turn leads to decreased employee turnover. The high level of trust enables employees to accomplish their duties and responsibilities in a zealous way (Tremblay, Cloutier, Simard, Chênevert, & Vandenberghe, 2010). Thus, the sixth hypothesis of this study was suggested as follows.

H6: Trust positively affects knowledge sharing behavior.

2. 7. The Mediating Role of Trust in the Relationship between SHRM Practices and Knowledge Sharing Behavior

In the literature, some authors argue that Human Resource Management practices do not affect knowledge sharing directly but they help with the generation of trust and commitment that is necessary for employee's willingness to share what they know (Arthur, 1994; Collins & Smith, 2006; Tsui et al., 1997). Some previous studies empirically proved that trust is an important mediator between knowledge sharing behavior and HRM practices, which in turn leads to firm innovative performance (Agarwala, 2003; Benkhoff, 1997; Thompson & Heron, 2006; Yeung & Berman, 1997). Therefore, we can say that trust acts as a central variable that integrates knowledge sharing behavior and HRM practices (Hislop, 2003). This led us to the formulation of the seventh hypothesis of this study.

H7: Trust mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior.

3. Proposed Framework

Based on the research objectives of the current study and the available literature on the variables used in this study, the following framework was proposed.

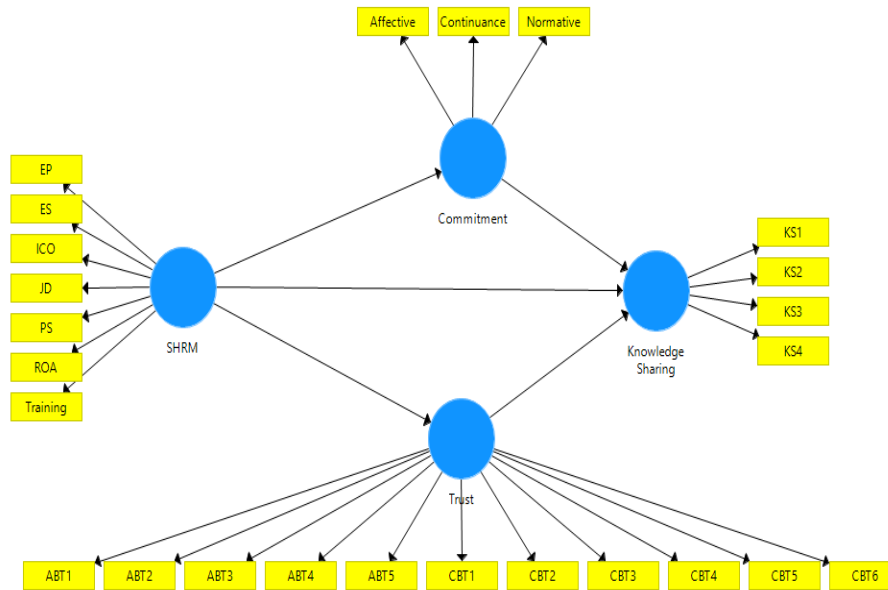


Fig. 1. The conceptual framework

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Population and Sampling

Universities listed in the “W” ranking by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan were considered as the population of the current research. The reason behind targeting only “W” ranked universities was that these universities have a higher requirement of research output from their faculty members. “W” is the highest rank awarded to the universities in Pakistan according to their quality scores by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. We contacted the administration of these universities to obtain the permission for the data collection. With the consent of university administration and faculty members, the data was collected through convenience sampling. The reason behind choosing convenience-sampling procedure was to make sure that the respondents are freely

available when needed. The sample size was determined by following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2011), as they have suggested determining the sample size by taking into consideration the number of items in the questionnaire. It was recommended to multiply the total number of items in the questionnaire by at least 5 or any greater odd number. As the data collection instrument in this research (details are mentioned in next section) was comprised of 64 items, the researchers decided to multiply it by 11. Therefore, we stopped collecting data when we obtained the data from the 700th participant.

4.2. Measurement/Questionnaire/Scale Development

SHRM practices comprise of seven sub-dimensions, namely training, employee participation, job description, employment security, result-oriented appraisal, internal career opportunities, and profit sharing. In total, the questionnaire used in this study was comprised of 25 items was adopted from Delery and Doty (1996). To measure knowledge sharing, this research adopted an instrument from Van den Hooff and De Ridder (2004) that entails 4 items. To assess organizational commitment, we adopted the instrument from Meyer, Allen, and Allen (1997) that is comprised of 24 total items and contains three sub dimensions named affirmative commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment, each measured by 8 items each. To measure trust, this research adopted the questionnaire from McAllister that is comprised of 11 items in total, which were further divided into two categories names as affect-based trust and cognition-based trust. Data was collected using a five-point Likert scale, where 1= Strongly Disagree and 5= Strongly Agree.

5. Results

This section of the manuscript discusses the hypothesis testing and the objectives of this research. Bivariate and multivariate quantitative analyses were used to test the hypotheses and achieve the research objectives. Structural Equation Modeling through Smart Partial Least Square was used to test the entire key hypotheses. Structural Equation Modeling was run through Smart PLS and the guidelines of Hair et al. (2018) were followed to conduct the PLS-SEM. According the criteria set for PLS-SEM, there are 3 steps in this regard. At the first stage, researchers test the collected data for reliability and internal

consistency as well as for validity. The results of these tests are given in Table 1 and Table 2, followed by detailed discussions.

Table 1. Reliability statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Commitment	0.916	0.947	0.856
Knowledge Sharing	0.959	0.941	0.892
SHRM	0.923	0.939	0.687
Trust	0.963	0.928	0.732

In PLS, in addition to Cronbach's Alpha, the composite reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) are the two additional tests to check for the reliability/internal consistency of the collected data. According to Jöreskog (1971), composite reliability values should be between the limit of 0.70 to 0.95. The results of current research (shown in Table 1) are according to the standard prescribed values. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value should be greater than 0.50 in all the cases because it indicates how much variance of the model is being explained by each variable. It can be observed in Table 1 that reliability is also established through AVE.

Table 2. Validity test

	Commitment	Knowledge Sharing	SHRM	Trust
Commitment	0.925			
Knowledge Sharing	0.793	0.944		
SHRM	0.702	0.674	0.829	
Trust	0.78	0.77	0.786	0.855

Table 2 depicts the results for the validity of the instrument that was used to collect the data. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest that if the diagonal values of the tables are higher than other values in the rows or columns of the table, the data and the instrument can be considered valid. It can be observed in the Table that diagonal values are higher than the other values, so we can conclude that the instrument used to collect the data was valid.

The next stage was to test the hypothesis or relationship among the variables. The criteria included the coefficient of determination (R^2),

the statistical significance, and the relevance of the path coefficients. Before moving towards the explanation of the relationships of the variables, collinearity should be examined to make sure it does not introduce bias into the regression results. If the value of VIF is above 5, that indicates that there is probable collinearity issues among the predictor constructs (Mason & Perreault 1991; Becker et al. 2015). Standard VIF values should be between 1 and 5. Values closer to 2.5 are considered as non-collinear relations.

Table 3. Total direct effect of all hypotheses

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	5.00%	95.00%	VIF
SHRM -> Commitment	0.702	18.275	0.00	0.339	0.598	2.559
SHRM -> Knowledge Sharing	0.674	15.892	0.00	0.634	0.758	2.855
SHRM -> Trust	0.786	24.019	0.00	0.594	0.736	3.257
Trust -> Knowledge Sharing	0.343	4.508	0.00	0.725	0.833	3.564
	0.476	6.065	0.00	0.22	0.467	3.085

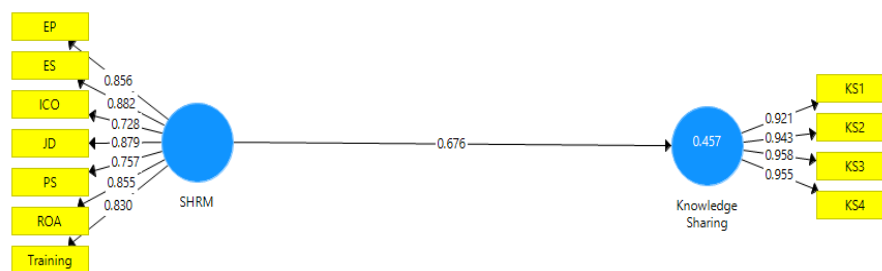


Fig. 2. Impacts of SHRM practices on knowledge sharing

Table 3 depicts the direct relationship among all the variables. Research would like to explain the results in detail according to the hypotheses. Table 3 and Figure 2 also show that 45% of knowledge sharing behavior is explained by SHRM practices. Threshold or minimum T value should be 1.96. The T value for hypothesis 1 is 15.892, which is higher than the threshold value, and P value is less than 0.05, which means that this relationship model is highly significant and fit. The VIF Collinearity matrices was also tested to further strengthen the analysis. VIF value for the foregoing

relationship is found to be 2.855, a value that is in the defined limit. Confidence interval values also show that 0 is not included in the class interval values. Therefore, in the light of the foregoing empirical evidences, we would like to claim that the hypothesis 1 “*SHRM practices positively affect the knowledge sharing behavior*” was accepted. Results are in compliance with the previous studies conducted by Delaney and Huselid (1996), Delery and Doty (1996), Paré and Tremblay (2007), Tsui, Pearce, Porter, and Tripoli (1997).

The value of the relationship coefficient R, T-Test, P value, and the VIF value are the most important measures based on which researchers can decide if the proposed hypothesis is proved or not. Following the foregoing criteria, direct hypothesis were tested and results for the direct hypothesis are presented in Table 3. Having said that, researchers would like to claim that Hypothesis 2 “*SHRM practices have positive impact on organizational commitment*” is accepted as R is .702, T values= 18.275, and $P < 0.05$. These show the significance of relationship and it does not contain multicollinearity as $VIF = 2.559$. This is also true for all the direct hypotheses. In the light of this guidance and detailed discussion regarding the acceptance of hypotheses, the researchers would like to discuss the direct hypotheses one by one. Hypothesis 3 “*Organizational commitment positively affects knowledge sharing behavior*” is accepted as R is 0.476, T value= 6.065, $P < 0.05$, and $VIF = 3.085$. Hypothesis 5 “*SHRM practices positively affect trust*” is also accepted as R is 0.786, T value= 24.091, $P < 0.05$, and $VIF = 3.257$. Finally, the hypothesis 6 “*Trust positively affects knowledge sharing behavior*” was also accepted as R is 0.343, T value= 4.508, $P < 0.05$, and $VIF = 3.564$.

The results of the current research comply with the previous studies and it also enriches the theory of social exchange. Social Exchange Theory claims that organizations which have a well established system in place are more employee oriented organizations and they think about the betterment of the employees and this in return helps to build trust among employees and the organization. As a result, employees will be more motivated, which helps in developing a positive attitude towards work, and employee commitment level is enhanced, and so, employees will show knowledge sharing behavior (Emerson, 1976).

In structural equation modeling, after successfully testing the direct hypothesis, the next stage was to test the mediating hypothesis while using structural equation modeling. Hypothesis 4 “*Commitment mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing*” was tested through structural equation modeling. Test results are shown in Figure 3 below.

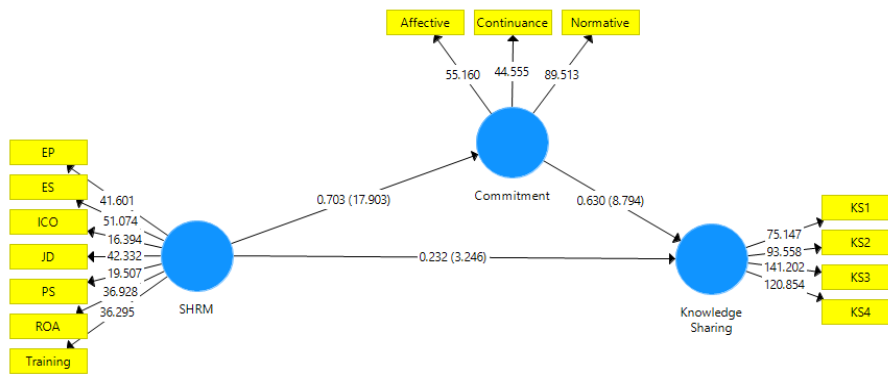


Fig. 3. Organizational commitment as the mediator

The direct effect of SHRM practices on knowledge sharing was 0.676, but after adding commitment as the mediator, the direct effect of the relationship was reduced to 0.232 from 0.676, which indicates that commitment acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing. However, the T value for the direct relationship is still greater than the threshold value 1.96, which indicates that although commitment acts as a mediator in this relationship, but it only partially mediates it. Therefore, we can partially accept hypothesis 4 “*Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior.*”

We came to know from the results of the last test that although organizational commitment mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior, something is still missing that can further enrich the relationship. Therefore, researchers went back to the literature. After going through the literature in detail, researchers found out that trust is the most important element because

individuals only share knowledge with those employees in whom they trust the most (Thompson & Heron, 2006). Finally the full model with one independent (SHRM practices), two mediators (organizational commitment and trust), and one dependent variable (knowledge sharing behavior) was tested for the final mediation hypothesis. The results of the final test are shown below in Table 4 and Figure 4.

Table 4. The indirect effect of both mediators

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	5.00 %	95.00 %
SHRM -> Commitment -> Knowledge Sharing	0.335	5.464	0.00	0.229	0.436
SHRM -> Trust -> Knowledge Sharing	0.27	4.395	0.00	0.171	0.375

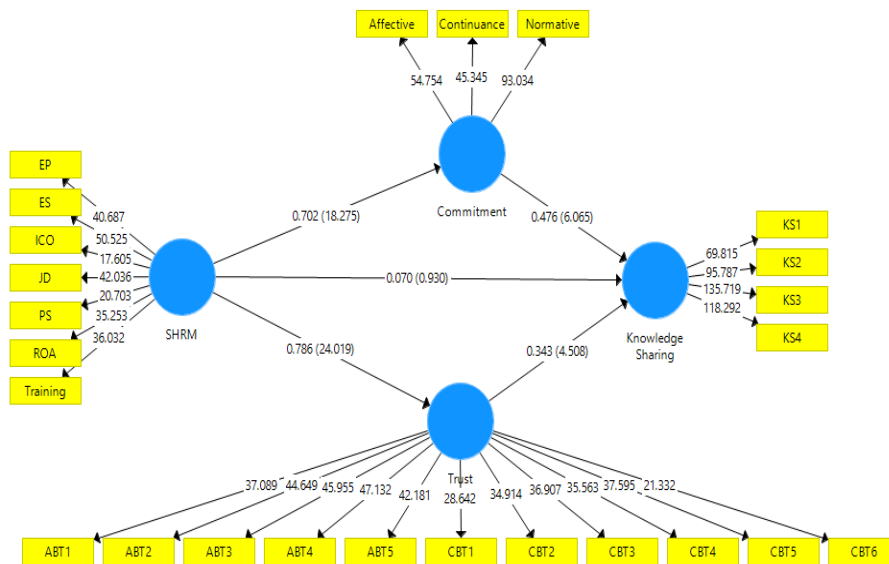


Fig. 4. Final models with both mediators

The previous model shows that the relationship coefficient R was 0.676 for the direct relationship between SHRM and knowledge sharing. It decreased to 0.232 when organizational commitment was added as its mediator. This means organizational commitment partially mediated the relationship between SHRM and knowledge sharing. When we added trust as a mediator in the relationship

between SHRM and knowledge sharing, the relationship coefficient R suddenly reduced to 0.070 from 0.232, which means that the direct relationship is no more significant. The T value for direct relationship also decreased from 3.246 to 0.930, which is far below the threshold level 1.96. This clearly indicated that the direct relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior is no longer significant. Therefore, researchers would like to claim that trust is fully mediating the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior. As a result, hypothesis 7 “*Trust mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior*” is also accepted.

6. Discussion

The results of the current study highlight the mediating role of organizational commitment and trust in the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior. This means that if the organizations want their employees to share their knowledge with fellow workers and with the organization, they should gain their trust, which is gained in return by adopting SHRM practices. Knowledge sharing is very important in organizations, especially in academic institutions / universities, particularly in the 21st century when universities are asking for higher output of unique research. Organizations should adopt SHRM practices that will increase the level of employee’s commitment to organizations. Most importantly, SHRM practices will help develop trust among employees that will ultimately lead to the knowledge sharing behavior.

The results of the current study are consistent with previous studies. Although the complete model (used in this research) was never tested in the current form, there are some studies that have independently studied the relationships among different variables that have been used in the current research. The study at hand highlights that the SHWS positively influences the knowledge sharing behavior of the university faculty members. This finding is in line with the study of Donnelly (2019). The results of this study also agree with Nielsen, Rasmussen, Chiang, Han, & Chuang (2011). According to them, HPWS is positively related to perceived organizational support, and organizational support leads to organizational trust and

organizational commitment, which are in turn positively related to employees' knowledge sharing behavior. Also Minbaeva (2013) revealed that relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing depends on the strength of SHRM practices embedded in the system of the intended organization.

Anvari, Mansor, Rahman, Rahman, & Chermahini (2014) found that strategic compensation practices that comprise a component of HPWS are positively associated with knowledge sharing behavior. Smeenk, Eisinga, Teelken, & Doorewaard (2006) examined the factors affecting employee and organizational commitment among Dutch university employees and found that different SHRM practices contribute to organizational and employee commitment. Trust positively affects knowledge sharing behavior, and organizational commitment positively affects knowledge sharing behavior, which are in line with Curado & Vieira (2019) and Imamoglu, Ince, Turkcan, & Atakay (2019), respectively. The findings of Adresi and Darun (2017) and Al Adresi and Darun (2015) revealed there exists a positive association between employee trust and SHRM practices.

According to Camelo-Ordaz, Garcia-Cruz, Sousa-Ginel, and Valle-Cabrera (2011), the influence of SHRM practices on knowledge sharing behavior was enhanced by introducing commitment as the mediator between them. Hence, commitment is a necessary factor to trigger the employees' willingness to share their knowledge. The mediating role of affective commitment and affect-based trust has also been examined empirically by Naeem, Mirza, Ayyub, and Lodhi (2019) in public sector universities in Pakistan. They found that the trust and commitment play a very important role in stimulating knowledge sharing behavior among faculty members. The element of trust in current study was used as the mediator between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior. The mediating role of trust was also studied and confirmed by some previous studies (e.g. Imran et al., 2016; Rubel, Rimi, Yusliza, & Kee, 2018).

The results of the current study confirm that SHRM practices are positively associated with trust building and employees commitment to the organization. These results are in line with the study of Adresi and Darun (2017), and they also support the study previously conducted by Souchi and Liao (2015). Another finding of the current

research is that the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior is mediated by the trust and organizational commitment. Rubel et al. (2018) have also highlighted the mediating role of trust between SHRM practices and service behavior. Based on the discussion above, researchers can claim that current research is more likely to be congruent with the previous studies. However, empirical testing of the structural framework in its current form is one of the contributions of the current research.

7. Conclusion

Based on the literature cited in section 2, collected and empirically tested data in section 5, fruitful discussion on the results of the empirical tests in section, researchers would like to draw the following conclusions. Organizational commitment partially mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior, while trust completely mediates the relationship between the aforementioned variables. SHRM practices, organizational commitment, trust, and knowledge sharing behavior have positive significant relationships with each other.

Thus, this study provides sufficient guidelines for HR policymakers and administration of public universities on how to make faculty members committed to their institution and to develop the culture of knowledge sharing by adopting SHRM practices. This research also suggests that organizations should support employees to have socio-emotional relationships so that trust can be developed among them. Pakistan is a developing country with scarce HRM research. The ineffective and mal-adapted application of strategic HRM practices potentially reduces the performance of Pakistani universities. It is to be noted that employees' knowledge sharing behavior is dependent upon their commitment to organization, and most importantly, it depends upon the trust that they have among the colleagues. Commitment and trust can be developed among employees through proper utilization of SHRM practices. Strategic HRM is an approach that defines how the organization's goals will be achieved through people by means of HR strategies and integrated HR policies and practices.

7.1. Managerial and Theoretical Implications

Current research advances the management literature on strategic human resource practices and knowledge sharing behavior in an innovative way and the findings of current study will be helpful for managers, practitioners, and academicians in a variety of ways. First, current research has covered the gap in literature by bringing great clarity and greater understanding to the mediating role of trust and organizational commitment in the relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management practices and knowledge sharing behavior. Second, the results of the study have revealed that SHRM practices positively affect knowledge sharing behavior. Moreover, it was demonstrated that trust organizational commitment mediates the relationship between SHRM practices and knowledge sharing behavior. This in turn reveals that organizations need to tailor their SHRM practices in such a unique way to encourage employees to share knowledge that they have learned during the course of their working life with the fellow employees through enhancing their level of trust and commitment to their organizations.

Third, current research shows that employee knowledge sharing behavior can be enhanced through trust and commitment. Therefore, organizations should align their knowledge management goals with the enhanced levels of employee trust and commitment. Finally, the competitive advantage of an organization depends on organizational learning, and organizational learning is predicted through knowledge management (Riege, 2005). Knowledge management systems work through employee behaviors (Park, Ribière, & Schulte, 2004). As a result, this study has developed a model based on trust and commitment that enhances knowledge sharing behavior among employees.

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