

## **Evaluating the Influence of Employees' Professional Ethic on Their Knowledge Sharing (A Case Study: the Health Insurance Administration of Kermanshah Province)**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of the present research was to investigate the influence of employees' professional ethic on their knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province. The present research from the aim viewpoint was an applied research and from the method viewpoint was a part of the descriptive researches of the correlation type. The statistical research society included the entire employees' of the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province, which in 2014 were functional in this organization and the total number of theirs was 114 people. The sample volume with the assessment of statistical society and with the use of the Korjesi and Morgan table and for the sampling the simple random method with 90 people was selected. The measurement tool of professional ethic was the Kadousire (2009) and measurement tool of knowledge sharing was the Bennett & Gabriel (2009). The statistical methods included the descriptive statistics and perceptive statistics (Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Pearson correlation and univariate and multivariate regression). The results showed that the professional ethic was effective on the employees' knowledge sharing. Moreover, the entire dimensions of professional ethic (responsibility, honesty, justice and equity, contest and competitiveness, respect to a customer, sympathy with a customer and observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms) lead to the promotion of the knowledge sharing. On the other hand the employees' responsibility had the highest influence on the knowledge sharing.

**Keywords:** Professional ethics, Knowledge sharing, Health insurance

## Introduction

The professional ethic is a cultural norm that with the performance of a suitable and good in a society avails a positive spiritual value and it is on the belief that the self-development work possesses an inherent value (Cherring, 2008). Therefore, the professional ethic is a guideline approach to the ethic responsibilities of an organization in the virtual face of direct and indirect environment, in the last decade has gained several attentions from the Iranian organizations (Yaginlu, Javaher Dashti, Khalili Iraqi, 2003). The domination of professional ethic, has a great benefit for an organization from the internal dimensions, including the aspects of relationship improvement, promotion of mutual understanding and reduction of oppositions, commitment increase and higher responsibility of employees' and reduction of the costs arising from the control and from the external viewpoint also from the increase of organization legitimacy and ethic obligation in regard to the stakeholder, income increase, profitability, improvement of the competitive advantage and attraction of customer satisfaction in order to have a greater interaction with an organization, could be fruitful for an organization (Bikzadeh, Sadegi and Abraham pour, 2012).

Since in the present scenario, the employees that are not committed to the professional ethic principle cannot reach a mutual understanding with others and this affair can bring about the participation level and their interaction with the surrounding environment, viz. influencing the colleagues in the field of issues transfer and knowledge sharing (Moeidfard, 2006). The knowledge sharing is the most important and most fundamental part of the knowledge management in an organization (Brink,

2007). Generally, the bases of the entire approaches present in this field, is the realization of the importance of ideas sharing makes haste to get the start in the mind (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2005). Referring to the position of the knowledge sharing in the knowledge management process, an organization can only manage knowledge if the individualistic and implicit knowledge is hidden in the mind of individuals in the organizational knowledge. Therefore, the individualistic knowledge only increases the effectiveness and the performance of an organization when it is professionally participated and shared in the entire organization (Zhang, 2006).

In the same line, the research of Connelly & Kelloway (2000), Whalen, Pitts & Wong (2001), Saks, Mudrack & Ashforth, (2006), Meriac, Poling & Woehr, (2009) and Cem Ersoy, Bron, Derous & Molen, (2010), Toorani (2012), Qorbani (2012) and Ansari, Husseini, Rahmani Yushaneloei and Saifi (2012) showed that the employees' professional ethic can increase the their participation rate in the knowledge and sharing of science and experiences in an organization. The knowledge sharing from this circumstance that adds to the development of skills, capabilities, and value formation and supporting the competitive advantage assist an organization, and are of importance for an organization (Du, Ai & Ren, 2006). In addition, in the view based on the sources, knowledge is accounted as the most essential strategic source of an organization. The management of this source is one of the most important challenges of organizations, especially the health centers are confronting it (Hooff & Ridder, 2004).

Similarly, from the other hand, the professional ethic has an important from this viewpoint that it has a marked influence on the activities and results of an organization. The professional ethic improves the relationship between the employees and this affair can be effective on the knowledge sharing (Bouref, 2004). Regardless of the professional ethic application and employees knowledge sharing in an industry and business, the functioning of this matter in

the health centers that basically are in line with the knowledge and technology and are the dwelling of the knowledge production, often have an indecision position (Gueteen, 1999). Since the employees' professional ethic rate and its effect on the knowledge sharing can increase the output and efficiency of the health insurance towards the services delivery to the patients and their families.

Therefore, this section due to the direct interrelation with the society health, needs the adoption of more and more employees' in the issues of professional ethic in the field of knowledge and its sharing in order to accomplish the efficiency methods in the delivery of the better services for quality improvement, low healthcare costs and on time fulfilment of the visitors needs. Now with attention to the professional ethic variables and knowledge sharing, this question arises that whether employees' professional ethic is effective on their knowledge sharing in an organization and besides the rate of professional ethic and knowledge sharing in a case study is up to what extent?

## Methodology

The present research from the aim viewpoint was an applied research for the case study society and from the method viewpoint was a part of the descriptive researches of the correlation type that investigated the correlation between the two variables. The research statistical society included the entire employees of the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province that in 2014 were functioning in this organization and their total number was 114 individuals. The sample volume with an estimation of statistical society and with the use of the Korjesi & Morgan table and for the sampling the simple random method, 90 people were selected. The data collection tool included the professional ethic and knowledge sharing questionnaires. The professional ethic variable was assessed using the professional ethic questionnaire of Kadousire (2009). This questionnaire had 16 five optional questions that were scaled according to the Likert spectrum. In a manner that for the acquirement of the general scores of the questionnaire, the obtained scores from each of the questions, were aggregated and was considered as the general score of the test. It is obvious that this score is indicative of the high or low rate of the variable based on the viewpoint of a respondent. In other words, as the score is higher, it shows the highness of a variable and vice versa. This questionnaire had 7 dimensions, responsibility, honesty, justice and equity, contest and competitiveness, respect for others, sympathy with others and observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms. Similarly, the knowledge sharing variable with the use of the knowledge sharing questionnaire of Bennett & Gabriel (2009) was assessed. This questionnaire had 11 five optional questions that were scaled according to the Likert scale. In a manner that for each option, completely agree 5, agree 4, up to an extent 3, against 2 and completely against 1 were considered. This questionnaire had three dimensions of knowledge access capability, inclination to knowledge sharing and miscellaneous and varied factors. The formal reliability rate of the questionnaires of this research was approved by the guidance and advisor professor. Besides, the reliability rate with the use of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the professional ethic and knowledge sharing questionnaire were estimated 77 and 85 respectively.

## Findings

In the present research 90 people from the employees' of the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province was investigated that from the gender viewpoint, 73 were men and 17 women. The employees based on the age were classified into four age groups that most of them were in the age limit of 31 to 40 years that the least of them were aged over 51. The job experience of the employees' showed that most of them with the frequency number of 34 people were having service experience between 11 to 15 years and the least of them with the frequency number of 5 people were having over 26 years of job experience. The education level of the employees showed that most of them were holding a bachelor's degree and the least of them were lower than diploma holders. The obtained results indicated that the employees' professional ethic rate was approximately 75.6% and their knowledge sharing was around 63.2%. Similarly, among the employees' professional ethic dimension, the components, honesty had the highest average and contest and competitiveness was allocated the least average. On the other hand, the component access capability to knowledge with 65% had the maximum average among the employees' knowledge sharing dimensions and the varied and miscellaneous factor with 61.8% had the lowest average. Initially, prior to the hypotheses investigation, research is needed. The normality of the research variables was evaluated with Kolmogrov-Smirnov (KS) test.

**Table 1.** Kolmogrov test in the case of variables normality

Variables	Z	SIG
Professional ethic	0.768	0.597
Knowledge sharing	0.588	0.88
Responsibility	1.222	0.101
Honesty	1.562	0.088
Justice and equity	1.257	0.098
Contest and competitiveness	1.914	0.061
Respect for others	1.639	0.079
Sympathy with others	1.641	0.072
Observance and respect in relation to values and social norms	1.034	0.158

Considering the above table it can be concluded there the meaningful levels of the entire variables is over 0.50. Therefore, the above variable data are normal, thus the normality of the aforementioned variables justifies the use of the parametric tests in order to percept the research hypotheses.

The research hypotheses were investigated via the regression analysis test with synchronous method and also the preconditions of the regression test that included the existence of correlation between the propertied variable and predictive variable with the use of the Pearson correlation test, the highness of the model explanation rate and also the presence of the linear relationship with the use of the variance analysis test were investigated and confirmed.

### The main research hypothesis

The employees' professional ethic is effective on the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 2.** Statistical indexes related to the main research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Professional ethic	0.636	0.404	0.636	3.343	0.001

From the above table, we conclude that the professional ethic can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with an increase of a variance in the professional ethic, the knowledge sharing will change around 0.636 that depicts the high effect of professional ethic on the knowledge sharing. Thus, it can be said that employees' professional ethic is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

Therefore, the main research hypothesis was confirmed and the zero hypothesis was rejected. The model function is as the under formula:

Formula (1): Knowledge sharing = (0.636) (professional ethic) +  $\epsilon$

### The prime secondary research hypothesis

The employees' responsibility is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 3.** Statistical indexes related to the prime secondary research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Responsibility	0.726	0.527	0.726	4.423	0.000

From the above table, we conclude that the responsibility can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with the increase of a variance in the responsibility, the knowledge sharing changes around 0.726 variances, thus depicting the high effect of responsibility on the knowledge sharing. Thus, it can be said that the employees' responsibility is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

Therefore, the prime secondary hypothesis is confirmed and the zero hypothesis is rejected. The model function is as the under formula:

Formula (2): Knowledge sharing = (0.726) (professional ethic) +  $\epsilon$

### Second secondary research hypothesis

Employees' honesty is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 4.** Statistical indexes related to the second secondary research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Honesty	0.498	0.247	0.497	1.888	0.006

From the above table, we conclude that the honesty can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with the increase of a variance in the honesty, the knowledge sharing changes around

0.497 variances thus depict a high effect of honesty on the knowledge sharing. Therefore, it can be said that employees' honesty is effective on the knowledge sharing of the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province. Thus, the research second secondary hypothesis is confirmed and the zero hypothesis is rejected. The model function is as the under formula:

$$\text{Formula (3): Knowledge sharing} = (0.497) (\text{honesty}) + \varepsilon$$

### Third secondary research hypothesis

Employees' justice and equity are effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 5.** Statistical indexes related to the third secondary research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Justice and equity	0.601	0.361	0.601	2.962	0.004

From the above table, we conclude that the justice and equity can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with an increase of a variance in the justice and equity, the knowledge sharing will change around 0.601 variances which depict the high effect of justice and equity on the knowledge sharing. Therefore, it can be said that employees' justice and equity are effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province. Thus, the third secondary research hypothesis is confirmed and the zero hypothesis is rejected. The model function is as the under formula:

$$\text{Formula (4): Knowledge sharing} = (0.601) (\text{justice and equity}) + \varepsilon$$

### Fourth secondary research hypothesis

Employees contest and competitiveness is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 6.** Statistical indexes related to the fourth secondary research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Contest and competitiveness	0.416	0.173	0.416	0.146	0.009

From the above table, we conclude that the contest and competitiveness can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with an increase of a variance in the contest and competitiveness, the knowledge sharing change around 0.416 variances that depict the high effect of the contest and competitiveness on the knowledge sharing. Thus, it can be said that the employees contest and competitiveness is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province. Therefore, the fourth secondary research hypothesis is confirmed and the zero hypothesis is rejected. The model function is as the under formula:

$$\text{Formula (5): Knowledge sharing} = (0.416) (\text{contest and competitiveness}) + \varepsilon$$

### Fifth secondary research hypothesis

Respect to a customer via employees is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 7.** Statistical indexes related to the fifth secondary research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Respect to a customer	0.615	0.378	0.615	3.11	0.003

From the above table, we conclude that the respect to a customer via employees can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with an increase of a variance in the respect to a customer via employees', changes the knowledge sharing around 0.615 variances that depict the high effect of respect to a customer via employees' on the knowledge sharing. Thus, it can be said that respect to a customer via employees' is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province. Therefore, the fifth secondary research hypothesis is confirmed and the zero hypothesis is rejected. The model function is as the under formula:

Formula (6): Knowledge sharing = (0.615) (respect to a customer) +  $\epsilon$

### Sixth secondary research hypothesis

Sympathy with a customer via employees is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 8.** Statistical indexes related to the sixth secondary research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Sympathy with a customer	0.481	0.231	0.481	1.73	0.009

From the above table, we conclude that the sympathy with a customer via employees can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with an increase of a variance in the sympathy with a customer via employees, the knowledge sharing changes around 0.481 variances that depict the high effect of sympathy with a customer via employees on the knowledge sharing. Thus, it can be said that sympathy with a customer via employees' is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province. Therefore, the sixth secondary research hypothesis is confirmed and the zero hypothesis is rejected. The model formula is as the under formula:

Formula (7): Knowledge sharing = (0.481) (sympathy with a customer) +  $\epsilon$

### Eight secondary research hypothesis

Observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms via employees' is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province.

**Table 9.** Statistical indexes related to the eight secondary research hypothesis

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms	0.417	0.173	0.417	1.108	0.003

From the above table, we conclude that observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms via employees' can predict the knowledge sharing rate. In reality, with an increase of a variance in the observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms via employees' the knowledge sharing will change around 0.417 variances which depict the high effect of observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms via employees on the knowledge sharing. Thus, it can be said that the observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms via employees' is effective on the knowledge sharing in the health insurance administration of Kermanshah province. Therefore, the seventh secondary research hypothesis is confirmed and the zero hypothesis is rejected. The model function is as the under formula:

Formula (8): Knowledge sharing = (0.417) (observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms) +  $\varepsilon$

For the prioritization of the effect of the employees' professional ethic dimensions on the knowledge sharing, the regression test was used stepwise.

**Table 10.** Statistical indexes on the prioritization of the employees' professional ethic dimensions

Variable	R	R2	BETA	T	SIG
Responsibility	0.726	0.527	0.726	4.423	0.000

From the above table, we conclude that only the responsibility variable can predict the knowledge sharing rate on the behalf of the employees'. While the other dimensions of employees' professional ethic, are not able to predict the knowledge sharing variable. In reality, the high level of the Beta variable coefficient of responsibility, neutralizes the effect of the other professional ethic dimensions and causes the entry of the other dimensions in the model function.

Formula (9): Knowledge sharing = (0.726) (responsibility) +  $\varepsilon$

## Discussion and Conclusion

Considering the main research hypothesis, it can be said that the employees' professional ethic and knowledge sharing are affecting each other, in a manner that as the professional ethic increases in the employees', the knowledge sharing increases on their behalf. The employees' professional ethic leads that the knowledge sharing level, including employees' ability in order to find the knowledge in an organization, the presence of an official system for sending knowledge in an organization, the accessibility of employees' to the their required information, high inclination of the employees' to the transfer and its participation among one another, the presence of the knowledge assessment systems in an organization, the lack of fear

of employees' to transmit their knowledge to the others, the natural essence of the knowledge sharing among the employees', the distribution of knowledge in a wide spectrum of it, the education of employees' in order to enter their information in the knowledge management system and others is promoted.

The existence of the professional ethic in the employees' can increase the level of employees' interaction with one another and this affair promotes the organizational performance. In this line Tajzadeh Namin et al in 2010, investigated the ethic interaction relation of employees' with their performances and their results were in concurrence with the present research results, since they demonstrated that such an interaction can create a satisfaction feeling in the employees' and lead to their performance promotion. Similarly, in another study, Pezeshkirad et al. in 2011, investigated the effective factors in the knowledge sharing among the employees' of an organization and showed that one of the effective factors on the knowledge sharing, is the employees' social capital, since the high social capital of the employees' can increase their interaction level with other members of an organization and such a thing leads to the transmission and participation of knowledge in an organization.

In a similar research also, Noorani in 2012, investigated the relationship between managers' professional ethic and knowledge sharing at the University of Science and Culture, and showed that there exist a meaningful relationship between the managers' professional ethic and knowledge management. Besides the justifiability factor was allocated the highest priority and the reliability the lowest priority that this result was completely in concurrence with the present main research hypothesis results. Also Qorbani in 2012, investigated the relationship of spiritual intelligence and professional ethic with effectiveness of the knowledge sharing, and the results obtained by him depicted that the spiritual intelligence and professional ethic create a field to establish the knowledge sharing and its effectiveness on an organization.

Considering the prime secondary research hypothesis, it can be said that the responsibility of employees' and knowledge sharing are affecting each other, in a manner that as the responsibility increases in the employees' the knowledge distribution is also increased on their behalf. The responsibility includes carrying out the job duties with total care and caution, taking an action to guide a customer, and in total a responsibility feeling in relation to his own behavior and conduct towards a customer can provide a field for the knowledge sharing. Therefore, in fine it can be concluded that as the level of employees' responsibility increases, they will be more loyal and more committed to an organization that this affair can increase the field of participation and knowledge sharing in them, since a responsible individual, also has a responsible feeling towards the knowledge and its participation with the other and wants that the other members of an organization are also benefited from this knowledge and information.

Considering the second secondary research hypothesis, it can be said that employees' honesty and knowledge sharing are affecting each other in a manner that as the honesty in employees' increase, the knowledge sharing also increases on their behalf. Honesty viz. an honest and disinterested behavior with the colleagues, delivery of the explanations about his work with honesty and trueness, and others can create the field for the knowledge sharing. Therefore, in fine can be concluded that as the level of employees' honesty increases, they will provide others their knowledge and information with an ease. The honest employees' will provide the knowledge and information that they have to the others with any expectations and this affair can lead to the increase of the knowledge sharing level in an organization.

Considering the third secondary research hypothesis, it can be said that employees' justice and equity and knowledge sharing are affecting each other in a manner that as the justice and equity in the employees' increases the knowledge sharing is increased on the behalf of

employees'. Justice and equity viz. the employees' decision-making away from any kind of fanaticism and dogmatic thinking, the observance of equity from the circumstances of the usefulness of an information for the employees', abstinence from any kind of the ethnicity and valuing discussion, lack of distinction among the employees and others can provide a field for the knowledge sharing. Therefore, in fine it can be such concluded that as the justice and equity is increased in the employees' of an organization in relation to one another, their interactions and relations will also get more strengthened and can better understand one another and even can help each other during the job difficulties and can provide their knowledge and information to their colleagues in order to optimally solve the job difficulties.

Considering the fourth secondary research hypothesis, it can be said that employees' contest and competitiveness and knowledge sharing are affecting each other in a manner that as the contest and competitiveness in the employees' increases, the knowledge sharing will also increase. Contest and competitiveness viz. the employees' efforts in the acquisition of the higher posts and positions, having a devotion and forgiveness, feeling towards their colleagues and others can provide the field for the knowledge sharing. Therefore, in fine it can be concluded that as the employees during the progress and competitiveness in the work environment exhibit a devotion and forgiveness feeling, the organization will encounter a healthier competitive environment where in this environment, the knowledge and information are smoothly transmitted and shared between the members.

Considering the fifth secondary research hypothesis, it can be said that respect to a customer via employees and the knowledge sharing are affecting each other in a manner that as the respect to a customer via employees' increases, the knowledge sharing will also increase. The respect to a customer via employees' viz. respect to the demands of a customer, observance of devotion and forgiveness on the behalf of employees' and helping a customer to enjoy the better services, respect to a customer's viewpoint, and others can provide a field for the knowledge sharing. Therefore, it fine it can be concluded that the respect to others and especially respect to the customers and colleagues can make the level of relations and interactions stronger and more stabilized and this strong relation can lead to a condition where others easily fro the transmission of their knowledge and information in an organization trust one another and provide their knowledge at their disposal.

Considering the sixth secondary research hypothesis, it can be said that sympathy with a customer via employees' and knowledge sharing are affecting each other in a manner that as the sympathy with a customer via employees' increase, the knowledge sharing will also increase. Sympathy with a customer via employees' viz. appreciating the purchase of a customer, having a common feeling of employees' with a customer during an issue creation and others can provide a field for the knowledge sharing. Therefore, in fine it can be concluded that as the sympathy with others rate and especially with the colleagues and customers in a work place increases, the relations and interactions will also increase and as a result the knowledge sharing increases, since one of the condition of knowledge and information sharing is the presence of bilateral relations and interactions between the individuals.

Considering the seventh secondary research hypothesis, it can be said that observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms via employees and knowledge sharing are affecting each other in a manner that as the observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms via employees' increases, the knowledge sharing will also increase. Observance and respect in relation to the values and social norms viz. observation of the own

beliefs and commitments in a workplace, observation of the social norms, observation of the social principles during an encounter with others can provide the field for the knowledge sharing. Therefore, in fine it can be concluded that observance of the values and social norms in a workplace, can provide the field for commitment and loyalty. Therefore, it is necessitated that the knowledge sharing among the organization members takes place properly, however, its conditions should be availed beforehand and an organization lacks any kind of social abnormalities and values defect of the work.

Considering the research hypotheses and the positive and meaningful effect of employees' professional ethic and its dimensions on the knowledge sharing, is suggested to the entire officials of the health insurance administration of the Kermanshah province that with the conduction of the training classes in the line to teach professional ethic to the employees', provide the field for the promotion of knowledge sharing in the employees'. Since the best and most assured work in this field is to inform the employees' of the importance to observe the ethic principles and institutionalizing this principle in their activities.

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