

Preconditions of Information Sharing Towards Value Creation: The Ugandan Government Perspective¹

Jessica Namuddu

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uganda

Hyun Gyu Oh

Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea

Abstract Information is power and one of the most valuable government resources. Information boosts various parts of the economy, making it possible for all stakeholders to be linked to markets. In the era of globalization, information sharing across cultural and national boundaries has been recognized as a key for handling most critical problems. With this information at hand, there is an opportunity for the people to meaningfully participate in governance through coming in public discussions and contributing to decision making. Numerous factors, including organizational, technology, and individual characteristics, have also been proved to have a significant impact on information sharing in organizations. In the present research, information sharing is considered as a mediating variable and value creation as the outcome variable. This research also incorporates inspirational leadership as a moderating factor between the independent variables and information sharing as well as value creation. In terms of data collection, the survey method employing a questionnaire was used. The survey involved the ministry of foreign affairs and its employees (N=202) were the unit of analysis. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 20 and AMOS software. The results of the analysis reveal many significant relationships among our research variables.

Key Words: Information Sharing, Value Creation, Inspirational Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Information sharing gives an opportunity to government managers to work at the same time, with the same information integrated from multiple sources or even with different organizations. Information sharing can also support the transformation of organizational structures and communication channels among multiple agencies working in different locations. For a better delivery of public services based on individual needs, the government should encourage

information sharing, if it is to achieve this goal and if coordination among the different stakeholders is a key point. However, it is true that decision makers lack the accurate and up-to-date information which they can use to make decisions based on evidence, as well as analyses and forecasts on their country's socio-economic development.

However, government managers cannot usually find the information needed to plan, make decisions, and act, because information is frequently held outside of their own organizations, or is collected for widely different purposes, or is maintained in disparate formats. In this context, information sharing becomes imperative. This research explores the preconditions of information sharing towards value creation in the government organizations of Uganda. This research is looking at some of the factors, including organizational, technology, and individual characteristics, with the aim to explore if they have an impact on information sharing. Information sharing is a process through which members of an organization collectively use their available information resources.

In previous research, it has been established that information is a key factor of any development process. Information plays an important role in national development; accordingly, the Uganda government has established a policy framework to ensure optimal uptake of this resource towards social and economic development. In view of the need to ensure development and creation of conditions for a policy design-driven process, the Ugandan government has recognized the importance of ICT in all policies. Considering the access rights, information should be shared with anyone; at the very least, it should be shared only with people with a certain level of clearance to access this information. Information/records are classified as top secret, confidential, secret; in order to determine who uses that information, policies can be helpful; however, information should be shared with people who have the rights of access to such information.

Previous studies report that improving information sharing can improve organizational efficiency, learning, innovation, flexibility, and understanding of organizational goals (Malone & Rockart, 1991; Sproull & Kiesler, 1991; Walton, 1989). While information sharing has not been considered as one of the key elements that can create value in organizations, employers and employees tend to think it is obvious that one has to share their information with others. Previous studies have convincingly demonstrated that factors like organizational structure, culture, technology, individual, motivation, legal frameworks, and policies pertain to the key elements that have an impact on information sharing.

Due to the importance of information and information sharing in our everyday business and life, the present research seeks to investigate the following research questions: 1) What is the impact of antecedent variables – organizational, technological and individual characteristics – on