Critical Success Factors influencing the Knowledge Management of SME's in Textile Industry

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ABSTRACT

In the current climate of increasing global competition, the value of Knowledge and learning in improving organizational competence cannot be overestimated. Managers are attempting to use Knowledge to sustain organizational performance and to gain market share. Effective Knowledge Management is indeed critical, as SMEs strive to enhance their competency and to gain economic edge. The knowledge that is available within the organization is to be managed to improve organization efficiency. Such an environment and culture will deliberately and systematically help to share information and knowledge with each other, which will reduce error, save valuable planning time, and better, individual and organizational performance.

Knowledge Management (KM) is a critical area for small business managers in today's competitive environment. Thus, this research paper seeks to evaluate KM success factor or Enablers as a source of sustainable competitive advantage for SMEs in Textile Industry. A study has been carried out on a sample to test the reliability and validity factors. The questionnaires were administered individually, which used five point Likert scale, the collected data was scored, coded and analyzed on the dimensions of the scale. The data was analyzed using the statistical technique using SPSS 18.0 software which includes Factor Analysis.

Keywords: knowledge management, learning, organizational performance, effective knowledge.

INTRODUCTION:

Business scenario has undergone a massive change in recent years thus changing the outlook of economies across the world. Last decade has seen accelerated growth in knowledge based industries and knowledge work. It has also witnessed the ever-increasing impact of competition and change. Knowledge has become the most crucial resource and how an organization manages its knowledge resource makes all the strategic difference. In an economy where the only certainty is uncertainty, one core source of lasting competitive advantage is knowledge. Successful companies are those that consistently create new knowledge, disseminate it widely throughout the organization and quickly embody it in new technologies and products. In order to build and sustain their competitive advantage, knowledge has become a critical strategic resource. Need of knowledge can be assessed at organizational as well as industry level.

NEED FOR STUDY:

The ability to store, captures, and disseminate knowledge within and across organizational boundaries has challenged managers for many years. However, as product life cycles have decreased and environmental complexity and volatility have increased, the need to manage knowledge is intensifying, particularly across the value chain. Firms view knowledge and knowledge management as part of their strategic orientation. The

difficulties of managing knowledge are faced by firms of all sizes. Low-cost strategies may emphasize knowledge that can be used to cut costs, lower prices, and shorten cycle times whereas differentiation strategies may emphasize knowledge that adds value to a product giving it unique characteristics that serve to differentiate it from the competition. This paper examines the process of Key Knowledge management enablers or critical success factors that needs for SME's for creation of knowledge both within the firm through organizational memory and across the value chain through knowledge management.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

This research is conducted to study the Critical success factors of Knowledge Management implementation in SME's of Textile Industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Knowledge management (KM) is a strategy for transferring the right knowledge to the right person at the right time. Beesley and Cooper (2008) defined knowledge management activities as all the activities in the organization required to move from information to innovation, the results of KM activities lead to innovation and increased competitiveness. Wiig (1997) defined it as "a group of
Clearly defined process or methods used to search important knowledge among different knowledge management operations". In general terms, all the activities that improve the value of knowledge assets are included in the content of KM. Therefore, KM is a kind of dynamic circulation process. Chang Lee et al. (2005) noted that knowledge management process consists of five components: knowledge creation, accumulation, sharing, utilization, and internalization. In order to ensure the success of KM process implementation, controlling KM enablers is important. Particularly in SMEs, during the initial planning stage, with limited resources availability such as human resources, material resources, technology and time therefore, enablers are mechanisms to activate KM, break the obstacles of
KM, and persuade staff to share knowledge and experience. Ho (2009) noted that KM enablers are critical factors that put KM concepts into practice in order to achieve KM effectiveness. Alavi and Leidner(2001) stated that KM enablers and KM processes are necessary preconditions for effective knowledge management. Knowledge Management Enablers offer a comprehensive framework of the enablers that affect KM adoption and show that they may be classified into three main categories: Wong K.Y(2005) highlights that *Human and cultural enablers,* which includes human resources, people skill, motivation, training and education, a culture of collaboration and trust. *Technical Enablers,* namely the degree of IT applications, the information system, infrastructure, degree of KM adoption *Managerial Enablers, i.e.*, cultivating trust, KM strategy, integrating KMS with staff, management style, management leadership, internal and external network relationships, organizational infrastructure, physical networks, teamwork, and rewarding. Valmohammadi, C.,(2010) highlighted and identified that variety of contingency factors (industrial, environmental and firm specific) and a substantial number of CSFs. Migdadi (2009) mentioned 11 KM enablers that are appropriate for SMEs (leadership and support, culture, IT, strategy and purpose, measurement, organizational infrastructure, processes and activities, motivational aids, resources, training and education and human resource management (HRM)) Knowledge management capabilities can be categorized into two broad types – knowledge infrastructure capability and knowledge process capability. Some researchers noted that knowledge infrastructure capability is KM enablers that prepare the environment for the KM process, technology, organizational culture and organizational structure as key components of a firm's knowledge infrastructure capability. Gold et al. (2001), Chin et.al (2016) suggested that knowledge process capabilities are needed for leveraging the infrastructure capability. Knowledge process capabilities have four dimensions: acquiring knowledge, converting it into useful form, applying or using it, and protecting it.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The present study is confined to Textile SMEs in Andhra Pradesh state alone. It has 30 districts, each having Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise base. The scope of study confined to one district i.e.; Guntur district having 117 Textile SMEs as per the information the DIC,Guntur.The enterprises for the study were chosen on the basis of the definition stated under MSMED Act 2006 and the same is adopted as Micro, Small and Medium Industries of both manufacturing and service enterprises. To explore the influence of Knowledge management enablers in organizations, this study geographically covers the Textile SMEs in Guntur District.

Sample Selection:

In view of the problem and scope of the study, a simple random sampling technique is adopted in drawing the sample. Every possible effort was made to include a cross section of the population in the sample. Assuming the population of Textile SMEs and it is normally distributed if the Z-value is at 95% confidence level then according to Nunnaly(1978)[33], the minimum sample size requirement is 384.However, 464 respondents , i.e. , Middle level managers of various 117 Textile SMEs have given their responses. Out of a total of 718 managers in SMEs, 464 responses were found to be usable and there was 64.6% of response rate. Appropriate representation was given to various demographic factors like age, gender, education and turnover of the company.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Criteria	Items	Percent	Frequency of Respondents
Manager's Age	Up to 25 Years	10.60%	49
	26-40 Years	36.10%	168
	41-55 Years	53.30%	247
Gender	Male	62.1%	288
	Female	37.9%	176
Manager's Experience	1-5 Years	39.40%	183
	6-10 Years	33.20%	154
	>10 Years	27.40%	127
No of Subordinates directly report to Manager	1-10	62.6%	290
	11-20	37.40%	174
Working Position	Line Manager	73.4%	341
	Junior Manager	26.6%	123
Manager's Highest level of Education	S.S.C.	4.4%	20
	ITI	32.8%	152
	Diploma	36.2%	168
	Intermediate	6.1%	28
	Bachelor	11.2%	52
	Degree	9.3%	44
	Master's		
	Degree		

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olin Measure of Sampling			.766
Adequacy			
		Approx. Chi-Square	9976.590
Bartlett's	Test	of Df	630
Sphericity		Sig.	.000

Further analyses are conducted to ensure that factor analysis is appropriate to be conducted in this study. To predict if data are likely to factor well, Kaiser-Myer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) is 0.766 and Bartlett's test of sphericity are utilized. Although Garson (2001) indicates that KMO varies from 0 to 1.0 and KMO overall should be 0.60 or higher to proceed with factor analysis, several researchers such as De Vaus (2002), Field (2000) state that KMO generally should be equal to or greater than 0.5.The following table represents the internal reliability for each construct measured in the pilot study.

Table 3: Scale reliabilities

Serial No	Items	Chronbach's Alpha	Serial No	Items	Chronbach's Alpha
1	COL1	0.866	20	ITS4	0.846
2	COL2	0.858	21	SOE1	0.824
3	COL3	0.883	22	SOE2	0.83
4	COL4	0.889	23	SOE3	0.839
5	TRU1	0.833	24	SOE4	0.843
6	TRU2	0.842	25	T&Dev;D1	0.844
7	TRU3	0.847	26	T&Dev;D2	0.855
8	TRU4	0.842	27	T&Dev;D3	0.849
9	TSK1	0.753	28	T&Dev;D4	0.844
10	TSK2	0.851	29	CRS1	0.839
11	TSK3	0.816	30	CRS2	0.863
12	TSK4	0.75	31	CRS3	0.864
13	TFL1	0.825	32	CRS4	0.848
14	TFL2	0.848	33	P&A1	0.764
15	TFL3	0.844	34	P&A2	0.778
16	TFL4	0.827	35	P&A3	0.792
17	ITS1	0.871	36	P&A4	0.792
18	ITS2	0.847			
19	ITS3	0.895			

From the above Table No: 3 it highlights that Chrobach's alpha is a statistic. It is generally used as a measure of internal consistency or reliability of measurement. When items are used to form a scale they need to have internal consistency. Generally alpha coefficient ranges in value from 0 to 1 and may be used to describe the reliability factors extracted from dichotomous (1= Poor, 5=Excellent).Reliability Scores 0.7 or higher in order to use a psychometric instrument. This rule should be applied with caution when alpha has been computed from items that are not correlated.

CONVERGENT VALIDITY:

The Table 4 represents an item –total correlation test is performed to check if any item in the set of tests is inconsistent with the averaged behaviour of others, and thus can be discarded. From the given table 4, all corrected item-total correlation lies between 0.5-0.9, indicates proper items for further tests. The corrected item correlation items for collaboration are between 0.7-0.9;Trust items in term of corrected item correlation is between 0.7-0.8; T-Shaped skills are between 0.5-0.8; Corrected item correlation is between 0.5-0.8; Transformational leadership for corrected item correlation is between 0.6-0.8; IT support Corrected item total correlation is 0.6-0.9;Selection of employees is between 0.7-0.8; Training & Development Corrected item total correlation is between 0.7-0.8;Performance appraisal for corrected item correlation is between 0.6-0.7;Compensation & Reward system Corrected item total correlation is between 0.7-0.8;

Table 4: Convergent Validity- Correlations Corrected Item Analysis

Serial No	Items	Item- Total Correlation	Serial No	Items	Item- Total Correlation
1	COL1	0.807	19	ITS3	0.686
2	COL2	0.828	20	ITS4	0.821
3	COL3	0.76	21	SOE1	0.75
4	COL4	0.74	22	SOE2	0.734
5	TRU1	0.753	23	SOE3	0.712
6	TRU2	0.731	24	SOE4	0.7
7	TRU3	0.719	25	T&Dev;D1	0.754
8	TRU4	0.73	26	T&Dev;D2	0.726

9	TSK1	0.763	27	T&Dev;D3	0.739
10	TSK2	0.547	28	T&Dev;D4	0.753
11	TSK3	0.619	29	P&A1	0.692
12	TSK4	0.768	30	P&A2	0.661
13	TFL1	0.757	31	P&A3	0.629
14	TFL2	0.698	32	P&A4	0.63
15	TFL3	0.708	33	CRS1	0.791
16	TFL4	0.749	34	CRS2	0.727
17	ITS1	0.756	35	CRS3	0.725
18	ITS2	0.819	36	CRS4	0.766

Table 5: Communalities Matrix

Serial No	Items	Communalities	Serial No	Scales	Communalities
1	COL1	0.81	19	ITS3	0.665
2	COL2	0.83	20	ITS4	0.836
3	COL3	0.763	21	SOE1	0.749
4	COL4	0.727	22	SOE2	0.737
5	TRU1	0.769	23	SOE3	0.724
6	TRU2	0.737	24	SOE4	0.712
7	TRU3	0.731	25	T & Dev; D1	0.764
8	TRU4	0.725	26	T & Dev; D2	0.728
9	TSK1	0.826	27	T & Dev; D3	0.726
10	TSK2	0.524	28	T & Dev; D4	0.759
11	TSK3	0.613	29	P & amp; A1	0.711
12	TSK4	0.823	30	P & amp; A2	0.664
13	TFL1	0.761	31	P & amp; A3	0.651
14	TFL2	0.697	32	P & amp; A4	0.648
15	TFL3	0.715	33	CRS1	0.792
16	TFL4	0.754	34	CRS2	0.72
17	ITS1	0.75	35	CRS3	0.719
18	ITS2	0.838	36	CRS4	0.766

The above Table 5 highlights the communalities which range from 0.8-0.5. The following Table 6 shows the importance of Means which ranges between 3.0-4.0. The total variance is being explained in the Table 7 which highlights the Nine enablers are responsible for 71.33% of variance , however the first factor collaboration explains 8.711% of variance, IT explains 17.299% of variance , Training & Development explains 25.664% of variance, Trust explains 33.977% of variance , Selection of employees explains 50.366% of variance , Transformational leadership explains 58.509% of variance , T-shaped skills explains 66.196% of variance , performance appraisal explains 71.933% of variance.

Table 6: Means

Serial No	Items	Mean	Serial No	Scales	Mean
1	COL1	3.46	19	ITS3	3.12
2	COL2	3.52	20	ITS4	3.03
3	COL3	3.45	21	SOE1	3.33
4	COL4	3.48	22	SOE2	3.34
5	TRU1	3.30	23	SOE3	3.29
6	TRU2	3.26	24	SOE4	3.20
7	TRU3	3.22	25	T & Dev; D1	3.23
8	TRU4	3.39	26	T & Dev; D2	3.17

Serial No	Items	Mean	Serial No	Scales	Mean
9	TSK1	3.39	27	T & Dev; D3	3.25
10	TSK2	3.39	28	T & Dev; D4	3.29
11	TSK3	3.42	29	P & amp; A1	3.42
12	TSK4	3.46	30	P & amp; A2	3.35
13	TFL1	3.21	31	P & amp; A3	3.32
14	TFL2	3.22	32	P & amp; A4	3.25
15	TFL3	3.27	33	CRS1	3.26
16	TFL4	3.23	34	CRS2	3.32
17	ITS1	3.07	35	CRS3	3.33
18	ITS2	3.02	36	CRS4	3.31

Table : 7 Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.712	13.089	13.089	4.712	13.089	13.089	3.136	8.711	8.711
2	3.422	9.506	22.594	3.422	9.506	22.594	3.092	8.588	17.299
3	3.164	8.789	31.384	3.164	8.789	31.384	3.011	8.365	25.664
4	3.014	8.373	39.757	3.014	8.373	39.757	2.993	8.313	33.977
5	2.885	8.014	47.771	2.885	8.014	47.771	2.969	8.246	42.222
6	2.674	7.427	55.198	2.674	7.427	55.198	2.932	8.143	50.366
7	2.302	6.396	61.593	2.302	6.396	61.593	2.931	8.143	58.509
8	2.075	5.763	67.357	2.075	5.763	67.357	2.767	7.687	66.196
9	1.647	4.576	71.933	1.647	4.576	71.933	2.065	5.737	71.933
10	.936	2.601	74.534						
11	.733	2.037	76.571						
12	.700	1.945	78.515						
13	.598	1.661	80.176						
14	.556	1.544	81.720						
15	.495	1.375	83.095						
16	.474	1.318	84.413						
17	.434	1.205	85.618						
18	.420	1.168	86.786						
19	.411	1.142	87.928						
20	.393	1.091	89.019						
21	.383	1.065	90.084						
22	.356	.989	91.073						
23	.347	.963	92.036						
24	.320	.888	92.924						
25	.302	.840	93.764						
26	.291	.810	94.573						
27	.287	.796	95.370						
28	.272	.755	96.125						
29	.261	.724	96.849						

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
30	.230	.640	97.489						
31	.220	.611	98.100						
32	.202	.561	98.661						
33	.168	.467	99.127						
34	.153	.425	99.553						
35	.086	.240	99.793						
36	.075	.207	100.000						

Fig 1: Scree Plot
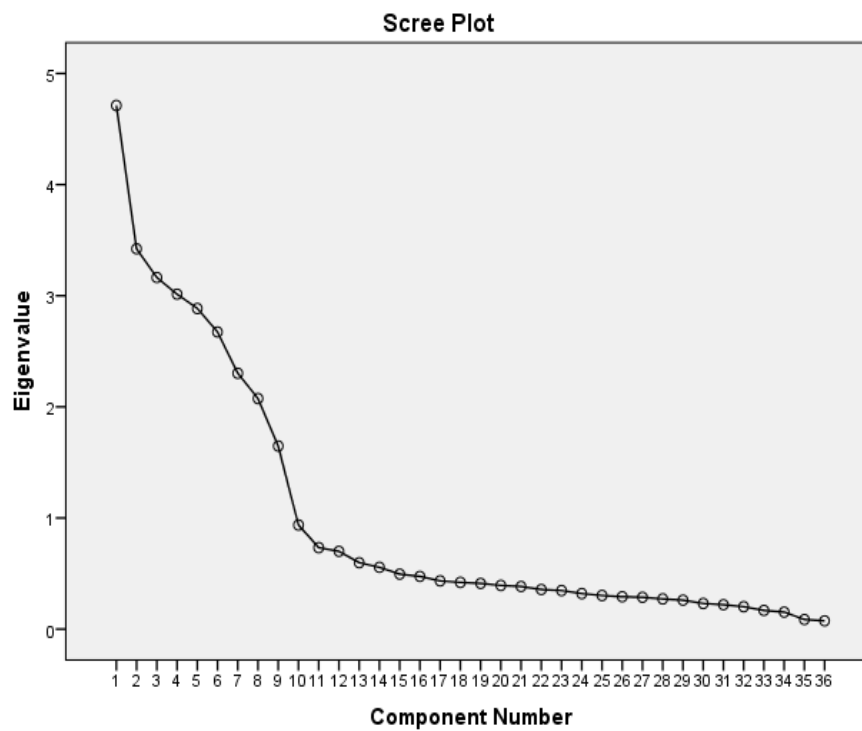
The above figure demonstrates the importance of screed plot which highlights the nine knowledge management enablers.

Table 8: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
COL2	.905								
COL1	.893								
COL3	.858								
COL4	.847								
ITS4		.895							
ITS2		.892							
ITS1		.852							
ITS3		.790							
T & amp; D1			.867						
T & amp; D4			.857						

	Component								
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
T & amp; D3			.845						
T & amp; D2			.843						
CRS1				.887					
CRS4				.870					
CRS2				.847					
CRS3				.844					
TRU1					.848				
TRU3					.835				
TRU4					.833				
TRU2					.819				
SOE1						.860			
SOE2						.845			
SOE3						.843			
SOE4						.822			
TFL4							.859		
TFL1							.849		
TFL3							.829		
TFL2							.815		
TSK1								.902	
TSK4								.902	
TSK3								.760	
TSK2								.697	
P & amp; A1									.747
P & amp; A2									.720
P & amp; A3									.670
P & amp; A4									.650

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

FINDINGS:

From the above Table 8 the critical success factors which are influencing the knowledge management implementation in SME's are: Collaboration,IT Support, Training & Development,Compensationa and reward system,Trust,Selection of employees, Transformational leadership,T-Shaped skills and Performance appraisal.

DISCUSSION:

Trust highlights that Employees in SME's share knowledge, organizational members possess a high level of trust and optimism about their relationship with each other. The level of trust that exists between the organization, its subunits, and its employees greatly influences the amount of knowledge that flows both between individuals and from individuals into the firm's databases, best practices archives, and other records.

Collaboration highlights the 'Shared context', which means a shared understanding of an organization's external and internal worlds and how they are connected. External collaboration is also critical for companies that want to stretch the business boundaries and innovate around markets and business models .It indicates that there are two major benefits engaging 'outsiders': they challenge company-internal assumptions and they bring a new body of knowledge to the party

People with T-shaped skills are extremely valuable for knowledge creation since they are able to integrate diverse knowledge assets. They have the ability both to combine theoretical and practical knowledge and to see

how their branch of knowledge interacts with other branches. Therefore, Managers in SME's with T-shaped skills are able to expand their competence across several functional areas, and hence create new knowledge.

Today leadership establishes enabling conditions for achieving organizational outcome through the management. Leaders provide the context in which workers create knowledge and can influence the levels of creativity in the organization. Transformational and charismatic leadership theories provide a useful lens for understanding how the leaders impact the management of organizational knowledge. Transformational leadership is one of the most appropriate leadership styles for knowledge organizations.

IT support states that information systems designed for support of collaboration, coordination, and communication processes, as a component of the interacting ba, can facilitate teamwork. Moreover it was stated that in SME's an intranet can support individual learning (conversion of explicit knowledge to personal tacit knowledge) through provision of capabilities, such as computer simulation (to support learning-by-doing).

Selection of employees in this era where knowledge transfer and sharing are critical for developing a competitive advantage, the function of the HR department Manager is to select and recruit individuals who would subscribe to this culture of sharing information and knowledge dissemination. However, points out that innovative organizations the selection of individuals, with both appropriate skills and appropriate attitudes, has been identified as crucial to the project team's ability to integrate knowledge from diverse sources.

The role of Training & Development and Knowledge management initiatives, in recent times have focused on second-generation schemes with emphasis on knowledge production in addition to the first-generation emphasis on knowledge codification and sharing. Knowledge creation is a continuous and dynamic process and involves the process of capture and conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. Hence, the training and development programmes of Managers initiated by the human resources department, should, in addition to enhancing the existing knowledge, result in learning and development and these learning's should be captured into the knowledge base of the organization. Knowledge Management Strategies highlights that codification and personalization strategies which requires organizations to hire different types of people and train them accordingly.

Compensation/reward system highlights to maximize the value of knowledge sharing, employees must understand the benefits that sharing knowledge and experience provide to them as individuals. The advantages that will be gained to the organization as a whole. Senior management recognizes the sharing of knowledge. Knowledge sharing has become an integral part of every employee's daily function. A compensation/reward system is in place to recognize and promote employees who adopt that new behavior. The organization should consequently have appropriate reward and incentive system which would recognize performance and adequately reward persons who share knowledge with the others in the organization. KM strategies see effort, measurement and rewards differently. There are mixed views as to whether organizations need to introduce separate rewards to encourage knowledge building and sharing.

Performance Appraisal is that individuals are valued more for skills, competencies and performance than for loyalty, and these measures, rather than seniority, become the basis for rewards and incentives. Performance management identifies who or what, delivers the critical performance with respect to business strategy and objectives and ensures that performance is successfully carried out. Managerial staff plays a vital role identifying the performance appraisal mechanisms for staff.

CONCLUSION:

Knowledge management for SME's focuses on identifying, organizing and making available of the entire collection of tacit and explicit knowledge of the workforce. The workforce will respond by using its tacit knowledge to grow and improve the collection of explicit knowledge. In SME's knowledge implementation often becomes embedded not only in documents but also in organizational routines, process and practices (organizational culture).In this aspect (Organisational Culture) Trust,Collaboration practices will play a significant role for creating the tacit knowledge.

The increasing fierce competition deriving from Globalization and ICT has challenged the approach, asking for new ways to develop, diffuse and retain knowledge in SME's.So, firm size is a strong prediction of Knowledge Management implementation practices.So in this connection Textile SMEs are more likely to adopt IT and HRM practices if they employ highly skilled people where they will convert tacit knowledge to Explicit knowledge while enhancing their T-shaped skills.Transformational leadership creates a change in the environment from tacit to explicit knowledge creation. Therefore the critical success factors of KM implementation are important for successful driving Texitle SMEs.

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