Evolving human resource management processes and interventions as the new paradigms shaped by entrepreneurship, knowledge management, social network analysis

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Social network analysis (SNA), Knowledge Management (KM), social network theory (SNT). Graph theory, Social Comparison theory, dyadic relationship

Abstract
At the core of human resource management (HRM) is the way “inter-relationship among the stakeholders in an organisation is managed”, “objective criteria are applied to goal-setting processes” and how “HRM contributes to the creation of tangible value in the form of knowledge-based outputs.” Hence, the process of knowledge management of storing and sharing in regard to its processes, techniques and operations is linked to HRM practices of effective management of this inter-relationship. The research enquires into how human resource development focuses on building the entrepreneurial resilience, a key ability of entrepreneurs to overcome challenges and adapt to uncertainties, particularly during this era of Covid-19 pandemic. The efforts of organisational leadership, which needs to appropriate these inter-relationships to a social context either India or Bangladesh, always can be aided by a host of social network theories. Within remit of this discourse, the research would like to pursue the questions such as how the role of gender in the economic development process has been increasingly recognized as crucial, both in terms of potential for success and in the nature of the impact of particular development strategies and programs. Addressing these questions, thus, can help us to arrive at the possible HR interventions in this regard. The direction of the current research emerges from the interpretation of the variants such as knowledge workers, knowledge management templates and tools, expected gender roles of social actors, resource allocation, etc. The research proceeds to enquire how these variants are explained by these social network theories, their limitations and if some of these need to be repurposed in the view of emerging challenges posed by knowledge workers and their belonging industries.

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Research Assumption
The proposed research thesis is ridden with a score of interrelated assumptions such as the exploitation of labour capital enhancing shareholder value, the symbiotic relationship between HRD and unitarism, and HRD and learning cultures in varied organisational settings. How these assumptions reflect in India and Bangladesh context, such as capital-labour relation in time, place and space, and as such how these assumptions play out in the continuous state of dialectical tension between capital and labour, all the research expect to grapple with as it progresses. The research assumes that as various organizational factors and their influence on knowledge management effectiveness have been accounted for, summarising existing knowledge from HRD perspective can be a lot easier in terms of dentifying gaps, and providing a definite agenda.

Research Question
How Human resource management (HRM) is mediated through various interventions such as 1) "applying objective criteria to goal-setting processes", 2) “effective management inter-relationship”’, 3) "performance appraisal and reward system" aligning to social network analysis (SNA) perspective and 4) Knowledge Management (KM) context towards the creation and sharing of knowledge linking various forms of stakeholder ownership, such as entrepreneurial, intrapreneurial, etc?
Originality/Value of (Significance of Current Research & How it adds to existing body of Knowledge)

The research keeps its attention on the way knowledge management shapes up in organizations with HRM interventions, and the way the focus is increasingly shifted from technology solutions to social dimensions. The research adds to the repertoire of existing knowledge on how the focus on people and the management of knowledge-sharing processes owes to the role social structures comprising individuals, teams and work-related communities that has proven to be critical to knowledge management. The research particularly aims to explore types of archetype social structures in organizations and the knowledge shared within these social groups, both in hierarchical and non-hierarchical social structures.

The research proceeds to the deeper realm of knowledge management systems, as a functional outcropping of systems theory, and evaluates the questions that are so far considered "systems theory" as invincible along with the use of logic models to develop and evaluate organization and program effectiveness.

Introduction

A significant contributor to human resource management always would be the way the employees' inter-relationship is managed under a particular leadership in a social context. The above proposition traces its origin back to Hawthorne Works in Cicero Illinois on lighting changes and work structure changes pertaining to employees' productivity gain occurred due to the motivational effect on the workers. The experiment gave rise to Elton Mayo's human relationship approach which always underpins the leadership taking interest in employees to make them feel that they are valued and empowered. Particularly the relay assembly experiments component of the studies at Hawthorne Works posit that choosing one's own co-workers, working as a group, being treated as special, and having a benevolent manager are the real explanations for increase in productivity. The current research, which concerns itself with human resource management in India and Bangladesh context, would engage with Mayo and all his revisionists that followed him.

As market mechanisms provide a host of options to price knowledge-outputs this keeps up with firms their own way of re-organising themselves through downsizing, rightsizing, outsourcing and mergers and acquisitions. As knowledge management of an organisation mediated through HRM -- documents, agreements, policies, information, technical know-how, patent, etc. -- the storing, access, update and dissemination of this knowledge task the human resource personnel implement authorisations/permissions and role-based access controls situated within a framework of organisation's code of conduct and local laws and regulations.

The knowledge assets of organisation need to be managed and mediated through amenable units of the organisations co-opted by HRM, as there will be fierce demand placed on the organisation to continuously innovate and monitor the market, product life cycle, production turnaround time, optimal utilisation of resources, improve CRM and relationship with stakeholders, empower employees, most efficient ways of creating and sharing knowledge, etc.

Collaborative software and instant messaging platforms make it easy for people to share information in real time, and by gathering, organizing, and sharing tacit knowledge with the right tools at work, HRM can create an enabling environment where employees can establish more meaningful relationships, ultimately contributing to high production yield.

Classified as a Next Eleven emerging market according to Goldman Sachs report, Bangladesh's textile and agro-based industries including jute and seafood are extremely labour intensive pose a particular interest to the current research engagement. As there is a growing participation of women in the labour force¹ (possible due to the July 2013 Labour Act amendment creating provisions for workplace safety), there is a perceptive change in the gender role. How the demographic changes of the labour force bear out on the dynamics of inter-relationship of various workgroups in Bangladesh can be one of the key pursuits of the current research.

India's current unemployment rate seems to be highest in the last many decades, which partly can be attributed to India’s economic slow-down and low women labour force participation rate (schooling and
higher education can be the cause). Hence, the proportion of working-age people looking for jobs or working stands at its lowest in two decades, at 54%, compared to 62% in the late 1990s (it is currently around 70% in Brazil, China and Indonesia\(^3\)). The gross mismatch in the proportional representation in the labour force participation has created its own dynamics in the inter-relationship between men and women.

Further, as India is shifting towards self-employment, particularly among women workforce, something started 2004-05 (according to ILO\(^4\)), partly due to late 1990s increase in casualization of the workforce, the women appear to have established themselves in a better power-relationship with men.

The decline in casual workers in the recent years, along with the increase in self-employment, puts forward the point whether the shift towards self-employment is for better wage or whether this workforce is coerced to engage itself in any kind of economic activity in the absence of wage work. The labour force deprived of work in the space of wage labour seems to be less assertive than those who chose to become entrepreneurs as a choice. Yet, this cannot be conclusively said as it is a very subjective opinion.

**Methodology**

The research adopts a social network analysis (SNP) perspective to map on the inter-relationship among stakeholders, intrapreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and knowledge management (including knowledge-sharing and knowledge transfer), and thus, progress to find out the HR interventions each of the above key areas would require.

The SNA - network centrality measures and visualization tools - is put to explore and appraise the structural position of individuals (employees within workflow, communication, and friendship networks), within relational networks for creating and sharing knowledge and to explore implications for designing and implementing HR practices in knowledge-intensive firms (KIF). The methodology draws upon Daniel Brass (1984)\(^4\) measures that include criticality, transaction alternatives, and centrality (access and control) in networks and in such reference groups as the dominant coalition.

Through SNP, the current research targets a work design, along with developing “befitting” training and development HR practices, that can shape this interpersonal relationship. Since the nature of the work relationship is constrained by both network and hierarchical forms of organization it is to be found by the current research whether the nature of the work relationship is constrained by both network and hierarchical forms of organization. If such an exercise suggests that policy is predicated in the hierarchical organisation and innovation is embedded in former, the answer needs to be found Karen Stephenson and David Lewin (1996)\(^5\) how the networks in organisations can augment existing programmes in achieving "non-partisan" or "upright" employment practices.

The research will employ both closed- and open-ended questionnaires interviewing people and conducting participant-observation in their natural settings. The task over the years will involve a range of well-structured, although variable, methods such as both formal and informal interviews, direct and indirect observation of subjects, participation in the life of the group, collective discussions, analyses of personal documents produced within these social groups, self-analysis, results from activities undertaken off- or on-line, and life-histories in various community and work settings.

**Field Study**

An extensive cross-country field research will be carried out in multiple locations in India and Bangladesh -- Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, Sylhet, -- involving the collection of field data outside, secondary research in local libraries and other repositories, and workplace settings.

**Discourse (includes Literature Review)**

On the ground, the leadership largely relies on managing human resources that supports long-term business goals and outcomes with a strategic framework. As the deployment of human resources is
critical to the business these resources necessarily need to match to future needs, and macro-concerns about structure, quality, culture, values and commitment. The execution of those activities affecting the behaviour of stakeholders in their efforts to formulate and implement the strategic needs of business in an organisation and the pattern of planned human resource deployment and activities intended to help the enterprise to achieve its goals can be effectively interpreted through social network theory (SNT). Since organisational units as social networks are self-organizing, emergent, and complex, particularly in the era of rapid globalisation where complex coherent pattern emerges from interaction of the elements that make up the organisational system at the local level, the leadership must decide the contours of scope of a social network analysis. Hence, it is up to a particular leadership to assign a discrete level of analysis vis-à-vis to strategic human resource management, this is not to say that levels of analysis are not necessarily mutually exclusive: micro-, meso-, or macro-level.

In the strategic human resource management, where an individual member is at the core of discourse, the micro-level perspective of social network analysis (SNA) can reveal the relationship between individuals in multiple levels such as dyadic, triadic or subset level that could progress to a meso-level analysis.

Since meso-level networks of organisations are supposedly of the low density and may exhibit causal processes distinct from interpersonal (dyadic or triadic) micro-level networks it will have a particular bearing on strategic human resource management.

Meso-level must be understood from the meso-economic discipline and so as its extension of meso-level networks of organisations that distribute tasks for a collective goal, thus forcing the organisations to either focus on intra-organizational or inter-organizational ties in respect to formal or informal relationships. Intra-organizational networks themselves often contain multiple levels of analysis, especially in larger organizations with multiple units and sub-units, hence, the current research must be directed towards conducting its empirical study at a sub-unit level of organisation and highest level, focusing on the interplay between the two organisation structures. (Riketta and Nienber 2007).

Continuing the discourse on the meso-level the other way to look at the inter-relationship of labour workgroups would be through the prism of randomly distributed networks that leverage on the models of exponential random graph models. This framework of randomly distributed networks has the capacity to represent social-structural effects commonly witnessed in many human social networks adducing to the fact that human resources has these layers of networks within themselves, including general degree-based structural effects commonly witnessed in many human social networks as well as reciprocity and transitivity, and at the node-level, homophily and attribute-based activity and popularity effects, as derived from explicit hypotheses about dependencies among network ties. (Skyler and Desmarais (2011).

Parameters are provided in terms of the prevalence of small subgraph configurations in the network and can be construed as articulating the combinations of local social processes (organisational sub-groups or sub-systems) from which a given network takes birth. These probability models for networks (organisational systems) on a given set of social actors (organisational stakeholders) permit generalization beyond the restrictive dyadic independence assumption of micro-networks (organisational sub-groups or sub-systems), allowing models to be built from theoretical structural foundations of social behaviour. (Skyler and Demorias2011)

At a meso-level the human resource management too can relate to a scale-free network whose degree distribution follows a power law, at least asymptotically. Moreiraet al (2006)’s suggested scale-free network theory lays emphasis on a random network with a degree distribution that unravels the size distribution of social groups, hence, it would have a particular bearing on the way the work groups are formed in a social space.
The diversity of Bangladesh labour market – from Sylhet to Khulna or Rangpur to Barisal – the specific characteristics of scale-free networks will vary with analytical tools that would be deployed to create them. Similar trends can be found in the Indian labour market. The research must anticipate how to know in a scale-free network the relative commonness of vertices with a degree that greatly exceeds the average bears out in the Bangladesh or India case. Further, the research needs to find out what specific purposes in their social networks the highest-degree nodes (hubs) may serve, although this contingents on the social context. Also, it is to be seen how the ‘clustering co-efficient distribution’ characteristic of scale-free networks decreases as the node degree increases following a power law. The Barabasi model\textsuperscript{10} of network evolution can certainly be re-examined in Bangladesh labour market context bearing upon a particular relevance on strategic human resource management with relation to scale-free network.\textsuperscript{11}

The human resource management at some point of time does realise that rather than tracing interpersonal interactions using SNA model is not as important as the necessity at the macro-level analyses to trace the outcomes of such interactions, for example, economic or other resource transfer interactions methods used as tools of consumerism by large corporates or even public distribution systems.

The study of large-scale networks together with complex networks is a legitimate undertaking of the current research. These social networks likely display features of social complexity involving substantial non-trivial features of network topology, with patterns of complex connections between elements that are neither downright regular nor random. At this point of inquiry of the research an appropriate reference can be made to chaos theory. It would be interesting to see how these complex networks feature a high clustering coefficient, assortativity or disassortativity among vertices, community structure, and hierarchical structure as the current research would study work groups and labour market spreading a huge geographical expanse from Chattogram to Rajshahi in Bangladesh or from Kashmir to Kerala in India. As in certain cases such as the agency-directed networks it would be interesting to record how features such as reciprocity or triad significance profile emerge (triad significance profile in network motif).

SNT, when applied in an organisational context, implies a social structure made up of a combination of social actors (shareholders, regulators, employees, buyers and suppliers, local communities, etc). From the viewpoint of The societal structure is comprised of a complex set of the dyadic ties between these various actors, which always need to be studied from a perspective providing for a host of methods for analysing the structure of whole social entities, subsuming all kind of organisations within this, as well as a slew of theories explaining the patterns observed in these emerging structures. The current research must aim at a theoretical construct underpinning social networks inherent in various organisational structures establishing the relationships between individuals, groups, organizations, and various other social units.

The research proposes to engage with these structures from the viewpoint of SNA to identify local and global patterns and how these come to bear on a local context such as Bangladesh or India, locate influential entities, and examine network dynamics.

SNT’s interpretation certainly can enable the current research undertaking to create a model for the human resource management strategies to be put into use in a particular manner. Baird and Meshoulam (1988) suggestion for incorporating both an external fit (human resource management fits the developmental stage of the organization) and an internal fit (the components of human resource management complement and support each other) can prove to be relevant to the current discourse. As human resource management is witnessed to have multiple developmental stages and possesses several strategic components in order to form Human Resource Strategic Matrix (Baird and Meshoulam 1988) the implications of these ideas for SNT and leadership roles seem to be one of key emphasis of the current research.
Since the current research seems to be inherently interdisciplinary, hence, it relates to a cross-section of disciplines such as social psychology, sociology, and statistics. The interdisciplinary nature of the study calls upon a slew of analysis tools as following:

Graph theory (social structures employed to model pairwise relations between objects)\(^1\) [One of the key areas of HRM is to understand relationships between the social actors (knowledge workers) and model them into graph theory (model pairwise relations between social actors -- "influence graphs" model whether certain people can influence the behavior of others to "collaboration graphs" model whether two people work together in a particular way as the task will demand].

Balance theory\(^1\) (It is a motivational theory positing attitude change that conceptualizes the cognitive consistency motive as a drive toward psychological balance. The consistency motive is the urge to sustain one's values and beliefs over a period of time. Heider purports that "sentiment" or liking relationships are balanced if the affect valence in a system multiplies out to a positive result in a situation).

Social comparison theory\(^1\) (It focuses on the belief that there is a drive within individuals to obtain correct self-evaluations. It leads to a discourse how people assess their own opinions and abilities by comparing themselves to others in order to lessen uncertainty and apprehend how to define the ‘self calling for social comparison as a way of self-enhancement, thus allowing for ‘downward’ and ‘upward’ comparisons and expanding the motivations of social comparisons).

Social identity approach\(^1\) (an approach intertwining social identity theory and self-categorization theory which considers leadership as a function of the group instead of the individual); and

Social role theory\(^1\) (considers most of everyday activity to be the acting out of socially defined categories, thus, making reference to gender performativity and a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms and behaviours that a social actor has to confront and fulfil).

Simmel’s\(^1\) dynamics of triads and ‘web of group affiliations and Moreno’s sociogram\(^1\) (systematic recording and analysis of social interaction in small work groups) to analysing the interpersonal relationships together with relevant insights lent by the behavioural sciences the SNA certainly can serve the current purpose of the research. Also, Malinowski’s\(^1\) ethnographic model establishing each community/work group must be understood in its social context together with revisionists of SNT such as Radcliffe-Brown\(^2\) and Levi-Strauss\(^2\) can value-add to current research.

The current research’s empirical study in the form an ethnography fieldwork focusing on the way the network analyses need to be conducted that can be benchmarked to the ethnographic fieldwork performed by Gluckman\(^2\), Barnes\(^2\), Mitchell\(^2\) and Spillius\(^2\), either in a team or independently of each other.
The making personnel management a more integral, strategy-driven activity in organizations seems to have brought about a case study for SNT, as the trend is the personnel activities are often understood as constrained, convoluted, and separate from the management process.  

The social structure of an organisation determined by dyadic interactions engender multiple ties through which any given social unit (a team or team member of an organisation) connects. Thus, the emerging social structure represents the convergence of the multiple social contacts of that unit. The societal structure is comprised of a complex set of the dyadic ties between these various actors, which always need to be studied from a perspective providing for a host of methods for analysing the structure of whole social entities, subsuming all kind of organisations within this, as well as a slew of theories explaining the patterns observed in these emerging structures.  

The social network’s axiom, or so called the starting point of reasoning, adopts a particular approach to social interaction that is construed or investigated through the properties of relations between and within units of organisation (social system), instead of the properties of these units of organisation themselves. Since such an approach is relational, Parsons' and later Blau's model can offer a robust impulse for analysing the relational ties of organisational units with their work on social exchange theory.  

As the current research intend to look at more revealing perspectives the work of Nadel (network analysis through codification of social structure), Tilly's emphasis on networks in political and community sociology and social movements, and Milgram's path-breaking 'six degrees of separation' always would have a particular relevance for the current research undertaking.  

**Approach to Research Sampling**  
The approach to research would be to create clusters for ethnographic studies based on consumer groups as defined by brands and companies, and also to combine these clusters with a respondent driven sampling allowing a network-based sampling technique which relies on respondents to a survey recommending further respondents.  

Organisations representation through social networks will direct the current research to examine how organizations in Bangladesh or India interact with each other, characterizing the many informal connections that link stakeholders of the above identified clusters together. A particular adopted to research sampling in this context will come to bear upon the intra-organizational networks that have been found to affect organizational commitment, organizational identification, interpersonal citizenship behaviour in Bangladesh and India context.  

**Problem areas**  
The discourse on organisational commitment (Meyer and Allen 1991) which affirms finding means and ways to improve how members of an organisation feel about their jobs so that these workers would become more committed to their organizations through indicators such as turnover, organizational citizenship behaviour, and job performance.  

Meyer and Allen (1991)'s model of three-component commitment involving affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment or their subsequent critics and revisionists such as Solinger et al who use an Attitude-behaviour Model to gauge the how employees are predisposed to either leaving or staying with the company somehow failed to incorporate how the relationship among the stakeholders would emerge.
Even the Meyer and Allen (1991)’s model claims to have transcended the existing distinction between attitudinal and behavioural commitment in order to argue that a psychological state, it has at least three separable components reflecting (a) a desire (affective commitment), (b) a need (continuance commitment), and (c) an obligation (normative commitment) to maintain employment in an organization, but none of these components come to bear the element of employee inter-relationship (which certainly an employee) that is considered to develop as a function of different antecedents and to have different implications for on-the-job behaviour. The incorporation of the ‘inter-relationship’ element can further reconceptualise Meyer and Allen’s suggested framework.

The confusion always may arise as the agent-based modelling is always invariably to multi-agent systems, whereas in reality it is different from the explanatory insight into the collective behaviour of agents adhering to simple rules. The agent-based model will look at inter-relationship in an organisation through its perspective of actions and interactions of autonomous agents (both individual and collective entities such as organizations or groups) with a view to assess their effects on the system as a whole. Knippenberg and Sleebos (2006) who intend to establish the psychological relationship between individual and organization through a process of conceptualization in terms of identification and (affective) commitment manage to have a cursory look at ‘inter-relationship’ of employees. Building on the proposition that identification is different from commitment in that identification reflects the self-definitional aspect of organizational membership whereas commitment does not, the research proposes that commitment is more contingent on social exchange processes that presume that individual and organization are separate entities psychologically, and more closely aligned with (other) job attitudes. In the face of the complexities of SNT discussed above the Knippenberg and Sleebos’s (2006) identified core difference between ‘identification’ and ‘commitment’, which they conclude to have lying in the implied relationship between individual and organization, can have different interpretation, and thus may serve as the direction of the current research.

The knowledge management, explained through SNA, highlights trade-offs between strength of ties and bridging ties between varied organizational groups, particularly evident in the case of open-source software (OSS). The OSS groups are more networked than other organizational communities; the cooperation and collaboration among the members, which will cause various social networks to emerge.

The research will deliberate on an analysis of cluster or group structure as an input and cluster or group innovation as an output, where the focus is on “impact of network cluster structure on cluster innovation and growth” that is, how intra- and inter-cluster coupling, structural holes and tie strength impact cluster innovation and growth, and “knowledge management in OSS communities: relationship between dense and sparse network structures” that is, knowledge transfer in dense network (inside groups) impacts on knowledge transfer in sparse network (between groups).

**Implications, Limitation and Future Direction of Research**

The research tries to find its way around the discourse keeping in view that the SNT’s omission of individual agency is not always a plausible explanation for gaining grounds of social networks in the study of organisations.

The organizational citizenship behaviour, known as one form of interpersonal citizenship behaviour, can appropriately serve the current pursuit of the research as different hypothesized relationships in social networks can be conceived based on social exchange theory. Bowler and Brass’s (2006)’s study on interpersonal citizenship behaviour in regard to social network can serve as a good template for the current research as the authors conclude the relationships are significant when controlling for job satisfaction, commitment, procedural justice, hierarchical level, demographic similarity, and job similarity.
It is plausible to follow Behfar, Turkinia and Burger-Helmchen (2017) through their propounded hypothesis to see how this hold in the context of India and Bangladesh: 1) Intra-group coupling has a positive impact on group growth; 2) Inter-group coupling has a positive impact on group innovation; 3) Inter-group structural hole has a positive impact on group innovation; and 4) There is a trade-off between the effects of inter-group structural hole and inter-group coupling on group innovation. Can other knowledge workers like developers contributing to project tasks in groups other than their own can explore novel ideas for new project creation? Can all sub-groups of knowledge workers benefit from sharing knowledge as much as OSS group members, particularly developers? Are other knowledge worker sub-groups as well networked as the developers, so that like the latter they contribute to project tasks inside their own group exploiting ideas to improve those existing projects with better inside-group search possibility?

**Ethical Consideration**

The HRM processes and interventions are always riddled with ethical problems involving researchers with regard to the “distribution fairness” of the knowledge of social science, for implicit choices that are made as an integral part and parcel of research and implementation. The conception of fundamental human problems underpinning work organizations as “managing human resources” behaves the researcher to examine the implicit assumptions, values and goals. The conception is a socially constructed reality with “real” consequences and not a reflection of “objective” states of human and social nature with which the all the stakeholders of the organisations and researcher have to live. (Dachler and Enderle 1989) Further, to the extent that these implicit assumptions are in part based upon conceptual choices that are made by individuals or as a collective act of a discipline or work organization, the development of an ethical framework that could guide such choices becomes a crucial challenge for business ethics. A score of questions related to ethics can pervade almost everything -- selection and staffing, performance appraisal, compensation, retention decisions, and how companies compete for competitive advantage. The issues related to organizational politics, which HRM particularly concerns itself as it engenders certain political behaviour at the workplace, provides a context of re-evaluating the normative foundations of organizational politics. The interaction between ethics and political behavior calls for a Kantian deontological framework (Gotsis and Kortezi 2010) to foster a desirable political behaviour and create a virtue-ethics context.

**Conclusion**

As 21st century organisations, with a preponderance of knowledge workers, apply social network-based systems to support interactive collaboration in knowledge sharing over peer-to-peer networks, it is intriguing to notice how SNT is repurposed or reoriented to evolving organisational context in India and Bangladesh. SNT, that implies a social structure made up of a combination of social actors such as shareholders, regulators, employees, buyers and suppliers, local communities, etc, will make way for these evolving ways of knowledge sharing -- OSS communities serve as an example. Thus, there will be an emerging understanding of social capital in organizational-knowledge-sharing. In this newly gained insight, it is to be seen how social capital factors (social network, social trust, and shared goals) combine with the theory of reasoned action fulfil organisational goals and establish social trust.

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