

The relationships between social capital, knowledge sharing and innovation capability: The case of office staff in Vietnam

Duong The Duy¹, To Sanya Minh Kha², Tran Tien Quang^{3,*}



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¹Faculty of Economics – Finance, Ho Chi Minh City University of Foreign Languages and Information Technology, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

²Library, Vietnam Buddhist University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

³University of Economics and Law, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Correspondence

Duong The Duy, Faculty of Economics – Finance, Ho Chi Minh City University of Foreign Languages and Information Technology, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Correspondence

Tran Tien Quang, University of Economics and Law, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Email: quangtt88.2018@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the relationship between social capital, information sharing, and innovation potential in Vietnam's small and medium-sized firms (SMEs). Utilizing social capital theory, the study formulates a conceptual framework to investigate how characteristics of social capital influence information exchange behaviors, hence promoting creativity at both individual and collective levels. The empirical research relies on survey data from 787 office personnel employed in Vietnamese SMEs. The study utilizes exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) to authenticate the measurement constructs and examine the proposed correlations. The results indicate that several aspects of social capital, specifically social interaction links, trust, norms of reciprocity, group identification, and shared objectives, positively influence knowledge donation and knowledge acquisition. These knowledge-sharing systems subsequently augment organizations' innovative capacity, underscoring the pivotal importance of social capital in knowledge-driven organizational advancement. Among these aspects, trust stands out as a particularly complex factor. Findings indicate trust significantly enhances knowledge acquisition by reducing communication obstacles and fostering transparent information exchange. Nonetheless, its impact on knowledge donation is statistically negligible. This paradox is likely due to competitive organizational dynamics that hinder individuals' inclination to share knowledge, despite existing interpersonal trust voluntarily. This study enhances the theoretical comprehension of social capital's role as a catalyst for innovation by contextualizing the investigation within the framework of SMEs in developing countries. It emphasizes the significance of fostering robust social connections, rules of reciprocity, and common goals to cultivate a collaborative culture. The findings provide managerial insights for SME leaders: fostering mutual trust, creating incentives for information exchange, and enhancing group identity can substantially enhance sustainable innovation capability. This research enhances theoretical and managerial perspectives by elucidating how social capital converts into innovative outcomes in resource-limited organizational settings.

Key words: Social Capital, Knowledge Sharing, Innovation Capability, Office Staff

INTRODUCTION

Business organization and management are dynamic fields that continue to evolve in response to the demands of an increasingly competitive global economy. In this environment, managers seek effective strategies to improve performance, ensure long-term sustainability, and maintain a competitive edge. As a rapidly developing economy in Southeast Asia, Vietnam is actively engaged in this process. Vietnamese business leaders have consistently pursued advancement by drawing on global best practices and lessons from successful domestic enterprises. Their priorities include organizational design, resource efficiency, human resource development, financial management, marketing, internal communication, and the adoption of technological innovations. While practical experience is vital, scientific research provides the theoretical foundation that informs and

strengthens managerial decision-making. Academic insights into business organization and management are typically acquired through formal education or continuous self-learning by current and future leaders. In response to the need for evidence-based knowledge, this study explores a specific but essential aspect of business management: the interplay between social capital, knowledge sharing, and innovation capability.

The research focuses particularly on office staff within Vietnamese enterprises, defined as employees responsible for administrative, operational, and support functions critical to an organization's day-to-day functioning. This group includes positions such as administrative assistants, human resources personnel, accountants, customer service representatives, and middle-level professionals involved in coordination, documentation, internal communication, and infor-

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mation processing. By examining how social capital influences knowledge-sharing behaviors and innovation capability among these roles, the study aims to provide theoretical insights and practical implications for fostering innovation through stronger social and knowledge networks in the workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social capital

According to Coleman and Portes^{1,2}, the notion of social capital was first articulated by Hanifan in 1916 and has subsequently been elaborated upon and understood by other scholars across diverse fields, including education and development economics. Social capital includes actual and potential internal resources inherent in the network of an individual or social entity's ties. Nahapiet and colleagues³ classify social capital into three interconnected dimensions: structural, relational, and cognitive, each serving a unique function in the development and application of social capital. The structural dimension of social capital primarily concerns the relationships among network members, emphasizing the frequency of interactions and the exchange of information between them. This dimension encompasses the arrangement of an individual's or group's social connections, comprising both direct and indirect relationships that enable the transfer of resources and information. It illustrates the overarching structure governing social interactions, particularly highlighting these social relationships' existence, intensity, and patterns. Research has investigated how this structural characteristic facilitates effective communication and coordination, emphasizing the importance of interaction frequency and the quality of information exchange as critical components⁴⁻⁷.

Conversely, the relational component emphasizes the personal connections individuals develop via continuous interactions. It highlights the emotional dimensions of social capital, including trust, reciprocity, and recognition, which are essential for forming robust interpersonal relationships. This component emphasizes the significance of collective history and recurrent interactions, through which individuals cultivate trust and mutual support. These relational traits are crucial for establishing dependable social connections, enhancing cohesiveness and collaboration within a social unit. The relational dimension has been extensively examined within networks and communities, where trust and reciprocity are essential for maintaining enduring relationships^{8,9}.

The cognitive aspect of social capital relates to the

shared understandings, ideals, and objectives among social network members. This dimension represents the shared understanding of norms and behaviors that dictate acceptable acts within a community or organization. Cognitive social capital includes characteristics like a common language, shared aims, and a unified sense of purpose, which facilitate the alignment of individual activities with collective goals. This alignment cultivates a sense of belonging and enhances coordination, since members function based on a shared comprehension of anticipated behaviors and objectives. Cognitive social capital establishes a common framework of meaning and interpretation, facilitating coherent social interactions¹⁰⁻¹².

The three dimensions—structural, relational, and cognitive—constitute a complete paradigm for comprehending social capital, emphasizing the diverse ways in which interactions within a network facilitate resource accessibility and collective action. This comprehensive perspective highlights the necessity of analyzing the interconnections among persons and the level of shared knowledge inherent in these relationships, each crucial for the proper operation of social capital across many contexts.

Knowledge sharing

Knowledge sharing denotes the process by which individuals exchange pertinent information, ideas, proposals, experiences, expertise, or skills relevant to the organization¹³. Lin¹⁴ characterizes knowledge sharing as a reciprocal transaction involving at least two participants: one who disseminates knowledge (knowledge donating) and another who receives or documents this knowledge (knowledge collecting). This communication is essential for sharing individual thoughts and promoting collective learning within an organization.

Kamasak and Bulutlar¹⁵ investigate the correlation between knowledge acquisition and knowledge dissemination concerning organizational innovation capacities. Their findings indicate that knowledge acquisition favorably influences both exploratory and exploitative innovation. Exploratory innovation emphasizes creating novel processes or products, whereas exploitative innovation improves and optimizes current ones. Conversely, knowledge donation facilitates exploitative innovation, primarily fostering incremental improvements within existing structures. These findings highlight the importance of information sharing as a catalyst for innovation, whereby the proactive accumulation of knowledge expands the spectrum of possible inventive endeavors, and knowledge donation enhances existing competencies and

resources. Raykov¹⁶ asserts that additional empirical study is necessary to comprehensively comprehend the effects of information sharing on innovation and employee skill enhancement. Comprehending how these activities convert into improved skills and competencies for personnel is crucial for maximizing information sharing as a means of organizational development and flexibility.

Innovation capability

Innovation capability is critical for organizations seeking long-term sustainability and competitive advantage in dynamic markets¹⁷. Lawson and Samson¹⁸ define innovation capability as transforming knowledge into new products or processes that deliver enhanced value for the organization and its stakeholders.

This study investigates innovation capability at both the individual and organizational levels. At the personal level, it is assessed through traits, behaviors, and performance outcomes associated with creativity. At the organizational level, it reflects a firm's capacity to develop new products, adapt to technological change, and maintain industry competitiveness¹⁴. Given its strategic importance, innovation capability requires a comprehensive evaluation across multiple levels of analysis.

While prior studies in Vietnam have explored the influence of social capital on knowledge sharing and employee performance in the public sector, research integrating social capital, knowledge sharing, and innovation capability—especially at both the individual and organizational levels—remains scarce. This study addresses this gap by systematically examining how social capital facilitates knowledge sharing and, in turn, drives innovation among office employees in Vietnamese SMEs.

The research is guided by two key questions: (1) What conditions enable social capital, knowledge sharing, and innovation capability among office workers in Vietnam, individually and collectively? (2) How do these factors interact to influence innovation outcomes? The findings clarify how social capital and knowledge sharing contribute to building innovation capability, thereby enhancing organizational growth and competitiveness in Vietnam's evolving business environment.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Social interaction for Knowledge sharing

Chua¹⁹ posits that social interactions enhance the quality of knowledge generated within organizations.

Knowledge sharing is more likely to occur when network members are familiar with each other²⁰ and engage in regular interaction. The depth of understanding between parties often influences the decision to trust another individual and share knowledge with them. In a study on academic social networks, Chiu and colleagues⁸ operationalized social interaction through dimensions such as relationships, time spent, and frequency of interactions among members, finding that these interactions positively impact knowledge sharing behavior. Mu and colleagues²¹ similarly emphasize that close, interactive relationships are conducive to knowledge sharing, particularly in knowledge collecting and donating knowledge. In line with these findings, Akhavan and colleagues²² identify social interaction as a key factor in facilitating knowledge sharing. Their research underscores the role of social interaction in fostering knowledge-sharing activities, including knowledge collecting and knowledge donating. Together, these studies indicate that frequent and meaningful interactions between network members contribute significantly to the effective knowledge exchange, strengthening organizational knowledge creation and collaboration. Indeed, in the daily production activities of office staff in Vietnam in general and in Ho Chi Minh City in particular, the frequency or time of communication at work is very important, as it helps Individuals e aware of the need to exchange knowledge with each other for professional development. From here, we have the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis H1: Social interactions will positively impact the office staff's knowledge collection.

Hypothesis H2: Social interactions will positively impact office staff's knowledge donation.

Trust, Reciprocity, and Identification for Knowledge Sharing

In modern knowledge-based economies, trust is a critical component of organizational coordination, facilitating effective social interactions, transparency, and collaboration. It plays a foundational role in enabling the free flow of knowledge by reducing fears of opportunism and misuse. When individuals within a social network share mutual trust, they are more inclined to exchange knowledge and resources, as trust mitigates concerns over potential exploitation and promotes a sense of psychological safety. Moreover, network members continuously assess and share perceptions of each other's credibility and reliability, reinforcing group-wide trust⁴. This collective trust fosters a cooperative atmosphere, enhancing individuals'

willingness to participate in knowledge-sharing activities and supporting the formation of productive and sustainable knowledge-sharing partnerships.

In the Vietnamese context, trust is often viewed as the foundation of professional relationships. Especially in private enterprises, individuals or organizations' reputation and perceived reliability are critical to initiating and maintaining cooperation. In such environments, trust reflects cultural norms and determines the success of collaborative efforts. Accordingly, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis H3: Trust will positively impact the office staff's knowledge collection.

Hypothesis H4: Trust will positively impact office staff's knowledge donation.

The norm of reciprocity, which emphasizes the mutual exchange of knowledge, is perceived by participants as fair and equitable. In this context, social capital functions similarly to monetary capital, where trust and obligation are key mechanisms of exchange. According to Coleman¹, when an individual offers assistance with the expectation of future reciprocation, it generates both a commitment on the recipient's part and a sense of trust for the initiator. Empirical evidence has consistently shown that norms of reciprocity significantly influence knowledge-sharing behaviors—both in terms of knowledge donating and knowledge collecting^{8,22-24}. These norms facilitate balanced and sustained exchanges, strengthen cooperative relationships within networks, and promote the efficient flow of knowledge and resources.

In alignment with global research, reciprocity is critical in knowledge sharing within the Vietnamese business environment. In the context of production and commercial operations in Vietnamese enterprises, reciprocity that yields mutual benefits is often viewed as a foundation for collaboration and sustained knowledge exchange. Based on this theoretical and contextual grounding, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis H5: The norm of reciprocity will positively impact the office staff's knowledge collecting.

Hypothesis H6: The norm of reciprocity will positively impact office staff's knowledge donation.

Identification refers to how individuals perceive themselves as part of a group, shaping their perception of the benefits associated with knowledge exchange³. This sense of affiliation fosters a feeling of belonging and positive emotional attachment to the social network, increasing individuals' willingness to engage in knowledge-sharing activities. Chiu and colleagues⁸ note that people are generally reluctant to

share knowledge unless they strongly identify with their team or organization.

In the Vietnamese context, particularly within the dynamic and competitive private sector in Ho Chi Minh City, organizational identification plays a critical role. When employees feel satisfied with and connected to their organization or workgroup, they are more likely to express pride, trust, and a commitment to shared success. Such identification enhances collaborative behaviors, including knowledge sharing, vital for innovation and long-term organizational development. In environments characterized by diverse business models and competitive pressure, a strong sense of team or organizational identity significantly increases the likelihood of active participation in knowledge-sharing practices. Based on this reasoning, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis H7: Identification will positively impact the office staff's knowledge collection.

Hypothesis H8: Identification will positively impact the office staff's knowledge of donating.

Shared Goal for knowledge sharing

A mutual comprehension of interaction standards within a network enhances the efficiency of resource exchange, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings. Common objectives allow network participants to anticipate the advantages of their interactions, rendering a unified vision essential for promoting resource sharing.

These collective objectives and standards function as unifying elements, fostering trust among members and promoting knowledge exchange. Empirical research demonstrates that shared objectives markedly improve information sharing, encompassing knowledge acquisition and contribution among individuals^{10,11}. In Ho Chi Minh City and throughout Vietnam, the organization's collective goals are of utmost importance; people are expected to conform and strive towards these shared aims. Organizations frequently foster awareness, collaboration, and involvement to reinforce alignment with their overarching objectives. The shared ambitions of individuals foster a unified group dynamic, propelling advancement and growth. Therefore, the subsequent hypotheses are posited to investigate these dynamics in further depth.

Hypothesis H9: Sharing the shared goals in social networks will positively impact the office staff's knowledge collecting.

Hypothesis H10: Sharing the shared goals in social networks will positively impact office staff's knowledge donation.

Knowledge Sharing and Individual Innovation Capability

Knowledge dissemination inside firms frequently transpires through routine encounters and informal dialogues, substantially influencing individual innovation potential. Research indicates that knowledge sharing improves employees' critical thinking and creativity, positively impacting their innovation potential^{25,26}. Holub²⁷ posits that enhanced knowledge sharing among personnel fosters creative thinking and idea generation, a perspective corroborated by Anwahi²⁸, who determined that successful knowledge-sharing procedures augment employees' innovative capabilities.

Ologbo²⁶ suggested a model connecting information sharing to employee motivation, revealing that increased engagement in knowledge-sharing activities is associated with a stronger propensity for idea production among workers. This discovery underscores the importance of knowledge sharing as a catalyst for individual innovative capabilities. Similarly, Yu and colleagues²⁹ discovered in their examination of Taiwan's finance and insurance sector that knowledge-sharing contacts favorably affect employees' innovative behaviors and overall innovation capability.

Subsequent studies have demonstrated a correlation between the practices of information acquisition and knowledge contribution and employee innovation capacity³⁰. Based on these findings, information sharing, including knowledge acquisition and dissemination, is essential for enhancing innovative capacities among employees. This premise establishes the basis for other hypotheses examining these linkages.

Hypothesis H11: Knowledge collecting has a positive impact on Individual innovation capability.

Hypothesis H12: Knowledge donating has a positive impact on Individual innovation capability.

Knowledge Sharing and Organizational Innovation Capability

Organizational innovation capacity denotes the capability to swiftly adjust to new knowledge, effectively tackle obstacles, and cultivate a culture that embraces novel ideas³¹. Knowledge sharing inside an organization is crucial for optimizing its capacity to produce solutions and initiatives, enhancing its ability to innovate and secure a competitive advantage³².

Burgelman and Wheelwright³³ define innovation capability as a holistic set of organizational attributes that facilitate and propel innovation strategies. Lin¹⁴

underscores that cultivating an atmosphere that promotes knowledge sharing among employees facilitates the conversion of individual knowledge into collective or organizational knowledge, hence augmenting the organization's knowledge repository. This comprehensive knowledge resource facilitates idea generation and the investigation of new business opportunities, fostering innovation.

Furthermore, Lin¹⁴ emphasizes that internalized knowledge acquisition and socialization processes facilitate organizational knowledge transfer into individual and collective expertise, thereby significantly influencing a company's capacity for innovation. The interplay between organizational knowledge processes and individual contributions is essential for maintaining innovative activities within the firm.

Based on these discoveries, final hypotheses are established to investigate the relationships between knowledge-sharing practices and organizational innovation capability. These theories elucidate how information sharing fosters a dynamic, innovation-driven company culture.

Hypothesis H13: Knowledge collecting positively impacts the office staff's Organizational innovation capability.

Hypothesis H14: Knowledge donating positively impacts the office staff's Organizational innovation capability.

Relationship between Individual Innovation Capability and Organizational Innovation Capability

Organizational innovation activities are heavily influenced by the CEO's expertise and innovative capacity, as noted by Burton³⁴. Andries and Czarnitzki³⁵ expanded on this view, highlighting that employees play a substantial role in driving organizational innovation beyond the CEO and managers. Liao and colleagues³⁶ argue that for knowledge sharing among employees to benefit the organization, it must be effectively transformed into competencies relevant to staff roles, ultimately enhancing the organization's capacity for innovation.

According to Ologbo²⁶, an organization's overall innovation capacity cannot be realized without cultivating the innovative capabilities of individual employees. They propose that the organization's innovation potential is the cumulative result of individual capacities. Consequently, building platforms for knowledge exchange among employees is crucial. Such platforms

foster individual innovation and amplify the organization's overall innovation capability by facilitating skill development and creative thinking among staff. Therefore, establishing supportive environments for knowledge exchange among employees directly contributes to enhancing individual innovation capacity, which drives the organization's collective innovation capacity. This hypothesis explores how employee-focused knowledge-sharing initiatives contribute to broader organizational innovation outcomes.

H15: Individual innovation capacity has a positive impact on Organizational innovation capacity.

Conceptual model

METHODOLOGY

The study used a convenience sampling method. The survey questionnaire was sent to staff (including the board of directors and organizational units) of the office sector currently working at private businesses and companies in central provinces/cities of Vietnam, including Hanoi City, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Hai Phong, Khanh Hoa, Can Tho, etc., by distributing in-person surveys and online surveys using Google Forms. The minimum sample size is not less than 200, and the minimum for the SEM model will be 5 times the number of observed variables^{37,38}. This research model has eight latent variables with 27 observed variables, so the number of samples must be at least 200. To achieve this minimum sample size, the author sent the survey to 95 in-person participants and 721 surveys online. The survey was conducted in late 2023, resulting in 75 valid paper responses and 712 valid online responses.

A survey of small and medium enterprises in Vietnam was conducted. The respondents were directors and managers, the study's most significant sources of information. All respondents were between the ages of 30 and 45. Men and women accounted for 58% and 42% of the total. The questionnaire was created using established scales to ensure content validity. Since the survey questions were mainly contextual in Vietnam, they were translated into Vietnamese with the help of two academic experts fluent in Vietnamese and English. The questionnaire was pre-tested in meetings with ten academic experts and ten managers.

The study uses a 5-level Likert scale to measure observed variables. The measurement scales are referenced from previous research works in the same field. Specifically, the scale of social capital includes social interaction (SI) with three observed variables; Trust (TR) with three observed variables; Reciprocity (RE) with three observed variables; Identification (ID) with

three observed variables; Shared goal (SG) with four observed variables; Knowledge collecting (KC) with three observed variables; Knowledge donating (KD) with three observed variables; Individual innovation capability (IC) with five observed variables; organizational innovation capability (ICT) with four observed variables. These variables are inherited from the literature studies that the authors have referred to in previous studies^{22,26,36,39}.

The study will perform three testing steps with SPSS 26 and AMOS 20 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). In the first step, a reliability check was performed to ensure internal consistency between items measuring the same construct (Cronbach's Alpha). The second step is to test how well the model concept fits the data using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). EFA is recommended when there are no prior hypotheses about the factors or patterns of measured variables. The most common way to satisfy EFA is to use SPSS along with the "Dimension Reduction" technique with the "Principal Component Analysis" extraction method and "Varimax with Kaiser normalization". The third step is to perform a structural evaluation of the model by performing a path analysis to validate a set of hypotheses (SEM). According to Hair³⁸, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient ≥ 0.6 and Composite Reliability (CR) ≥ 0.7 , AVE (average variance extracted) coefficient ≥ 0.5 to ensure a convergent value.

DATA AND RESULTS

Data

Description of the Sample

Table 1 describes the demographic characteristics of office staff at organizations and businesses in Vietnam, including gender, age, qualifications, job position, work experience, and type and size of business.

Scale Testing

Table 2 shows that the scales have a Cronbach's Alpha reliability index and composite reliability (CR) greater than 0.8 according to Nunnally and Bernstein⁴⁰; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.6. Thus, all observed variables are accepted, and the concepts achieve reliable and convergent values.

Table 1: Description of the survey sample
(Source: Compiled by the authors)

Sample characteristics	No.	Percent
Gender		
Male	409	52%
Female	378	48%
Age		
Under 30 years old	165	21%
From 31 to 40 years old	252	32%
From 41 to 50 years old	331	42%
Over 50 years old	39	5%
Qualifications		
College and lower	197	25%
Graduate	409	52%
Post-graduate	157	20%
Doctoral level and higher	24	3%
Job position		
Staff/specialist	645	82%
Head of department	110	14%
Leader	31	4%
Experience		
Less than 5 years	87	11%
From 5 to 10 years	338	43%
From 11 to 15 years	307	39%
More than 15 years	55	7%
Type of business		
Coporation, group	94	12%
Enterprise	693	88%
Size of business		
Less than 100 employees	338	43%
101-200	268	36%
200-300	126	16%
301-500	47	6%
More than 500 employees	8	1%

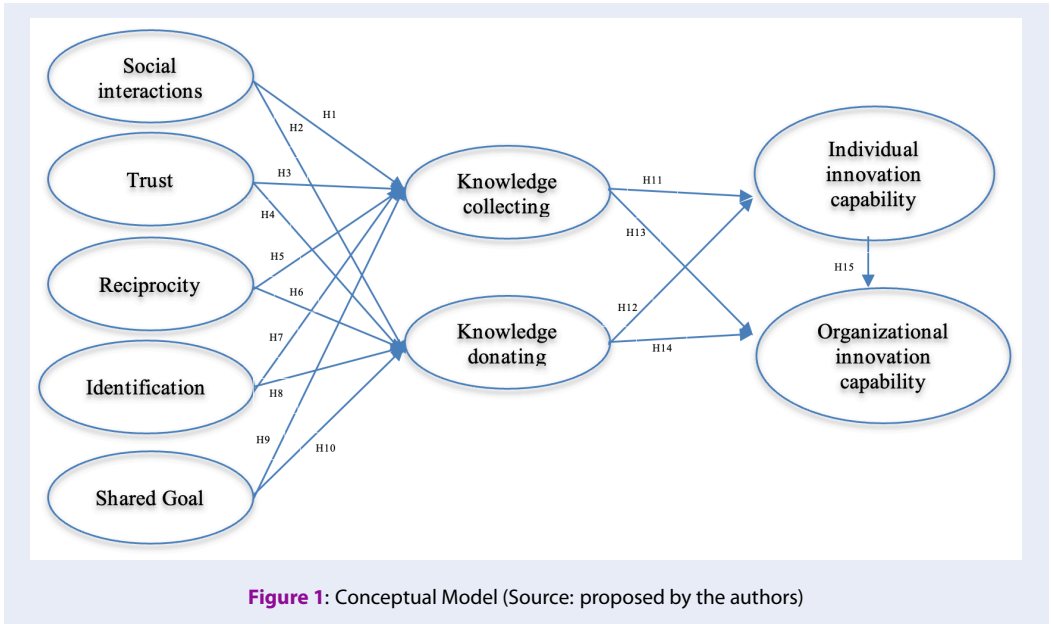


Table 2: Scale, reliability, and convergent validity (Source: Compiled by the authors)

Concept	Scales		Coefficient of correlation of total variables	Composite reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social interaction (SI) ($\alpha = 0.885$)	I always maintain close social relationships with my colleagues	SI1	0.772	0.886	0.722
	I spend a lot of time interacting with my colleagues	SI2	0.798		
	I am in regular contact with my colleagues	SI3	0.761		
Trust (TR) ($\alpha = 0.833$)	My colleagues will always keep their promise to support each other at work	TR1	0.673	0.837	0.632
	My colleagues are very honest when discussing work with each other	TR2	0.739		
	If I'm having trouble at work, I trust my colleagues to try and help me	TR3	0.676		
Reciprocity (RE) ($\alpha = 0.883$)	I determine it is only fair to help my colleagues at work.	RE1	0.765	0.883	0.716
	I know that my colleagues will help me, so it's only fair that I help them.	RE2	0.789		
	I believe that my colleagues will help me when I need them.	RE3	0.764		
Identification (ID)	I feel like I belong to my team	ID1	0.630	0.802	0.574
	I have a strong positive feeling towards my team	ID2	0.647		
	I am proud to be a member of my team	ID3	0.666		
Shared Goal (SG) ($\alpha = 0.906$)	My colleagues in my agency share the same aspirations and vision.	SG1	0.771	0.864	0.679

Continued on next page

Table 2 continued

	Colleagues in my agency are always concerned about risks and uncertainties in other agencies.	SG2	0.818		
	Colleagues in my office spend their resources (money, time, etc.) to help each other.	SG3	0.839		
	Colleagues in my office always create opportunities for everyone to mingle with each other.	SG4	0.725		
Knowledge collecting (KC) ($\alpha = 0.805$)	I often proactively gather information and skills from my colleagues.	KC1	0.648	0.806	0.581
	My colleagues share their knowledge and skills with me when I ask them to	KC2	0.631		
	I asked my colleagues to share with me their experiences and expertise	KC3	0.676		
Knowledge donating (KD) ($\alpha = 0.856$)	When I learn something new, I'm willing to share it with my colleagues.	KD1	0.740	0.857	0.666
	When my colleagues learn something new, they share with me about it.	KD2	0.738		
	Knowledge sharing between colleagues is considered normal in my team	KD3	0.709		
Individual	I like to try new ideas	ICP1	0.699	0.863	0.561
	I'm eager for exploration that leads to new ideas	ICP2	0.730		
	I look for new ways to do things	ICP3	0.738		
	I often improvise methods to solve a problem when the answer is not obvious	ICP4	0.625		

Continued on next page

Table 2 continued

Organizational innovation capability (ICT)	I consider myself creative and unique in my thoughts and behavior.	ICP5	0.613		
	My colleagues and I regularly discuss to find and test new ideas in every task.	ICT6	0.774	0.901	0.694
	My colleagues and I exchange with each other to find new methods, processes and techniques.	ICT7	0.785		
	Our team is the first to bring new products to market	ICT8	0.788		
	Our team's new products introduced to the market have been increasing over the past 5 years	ICT9	0.764		

The authors use the EFA method to perform dimensional assessment, represented by factor loading scores. The general objective of EFA techniques is to compress the information in an original construct into a smaller number of new aggregate dimensions or components³⁸.

- Results from the rotation matrix show that 16 observed variables (independent variables) with 05 factors were extracted at eigenvalue values stopping at 1,281 (>1), and the total variance extracted reached 77.892% (>50%). The results show that KMO = 0.845 > 0.5, Bartlett has sig. = 0.000 (<0.05) is statistically significant, the total variance extracted reaches 71.58% (>50%). Analytical results are consistent with research data.

- Results from the rotated matrix for 15 intermediate and dependent variables all have factor loadings > 0.5. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a technical statistical method used to verify the factor structure of a set of observed variables. All average variance extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliabilities (CRs) values and results are shown in Table 3. All AVEs were above the recommended level of 0.5, and all CRs were greater than the recommended level of 0.7³⁸. The results show that the concepts have full discriminant value.

Measurement Model

Figure 2 shows a measurement model of study, the results of testing the indexes are as follows: adjusted degrees of freedom Chi-square/df = 1.845<2, TLI = 0.972>0.9, CFI = 0.976>0.9, RMSEA = 0.033 <0.08, the indexes have satisfactory values with suitable model conditions. Conclusion: the model is considered consistent with market data.

Structural Model

From the results of CFA analysis to evaluate the suitability of the entire model, the authors proceeded to put 31 satisfied observed variables into the model for SEM analysis and tested the hypotheses. The authors analyze SEM from the initially proposed research model, then calibrate the model to get a better model. The official theoretical model proposed includes 5 independent variables: SI, RE, ID, TR, SG affecting 2 intermediate variables KC and KD, from 2 intermediate variables affecting the dependent variables ICP and ICT.

Results of Hypotheses Testing

Table 4 shows that the four hypotheses H4 and H9 have P-values of 0.144 and 0.559, respectively, all > 0.05, so they will be rejected from the model.

- Hypothesis H4: Trust between social network members will negatively impact the staff's knowledge donation.

- Hypothesis H9: Sharing a common vision in social networks will negatively impact the staff's knowledge collection.

Vietnam's social environment, shaped by an Eastern cultural heritage deeply influenced by Confucian philosophy, reflects longstanding societal values such as respect for hierarchy, social harmony, modesty, and emotional restraint. In this context, individuals are socialized to avoid confrontation, suppress personal opinions in public settings, and prioritize group consensus over individual expression⁴¹. These cultural norms permeate professional environments, fostering a workplace atmosphere where employees may be hesitant to share knowledge or speak up, especially in hierarchical or formal organizational structures.

Within organizations, particularly among office-based staff, these cultural tendencies manifest in limited knowledge-sharing behaviors. Several factors contribute to this constraint, including low self-confidence in one's expertise, introverted communication preferences, and an internalized fear of causing disharmony or being perceived as boastful. Compounding these cultural influences is the presence of intra-firm competition. In many Vietnamese organizations, individual performance is closely tied to recognition, promotion, and job security. As a result, knowledge is often viewed as personal capital, and withholding information becomes a strategic behavior to maintain one's advantage or visibility within a team or department⁴².

This interplay between cultural inhibition and internal competitiveness presents significant challenges to developing a robust knowledge-sharing culture. Despite the growing recognition of knowledge as a strategic resource, many organizations in Vietnam still treat learning orientation and knowledge management as abstract ideals. In practice, initiatives that promote knowledge sharing often remain superficial, driven by slogans or policy declarations rather than embedded in daily routines or incentivized structures. This disconnect between intention and implementation hinders organizational learning and contributes to fragmented development across teams.

Descriptive statistics from the current sample indicate that survey respondents are primarily at the staff level, which may not capture the perspectives or behaviors of managerial or leadership groups. Consequently, hypotheses H4 and H9, which are likely designed to test dynamics more applicable to higher-level employees, should be excluded from the analytical model.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity (Source: Data processing results from AMOS)

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)
KC	0.806	0.581	0.166	0.808
SG	0.864	0.679	0.163	0.874
SI	0.886	0.722	0.379	0.888
RE	0.883	0.716	0.570	0.884
ID	0.802	0.574	0.258	0.807
TR	0.837	0.632	0.108	0.847
KD	0.857	0.666	0.487	0.857
ICT	0.901	0.694	0.570	0.901
ICP	0.863	0.561	0.417	0.875

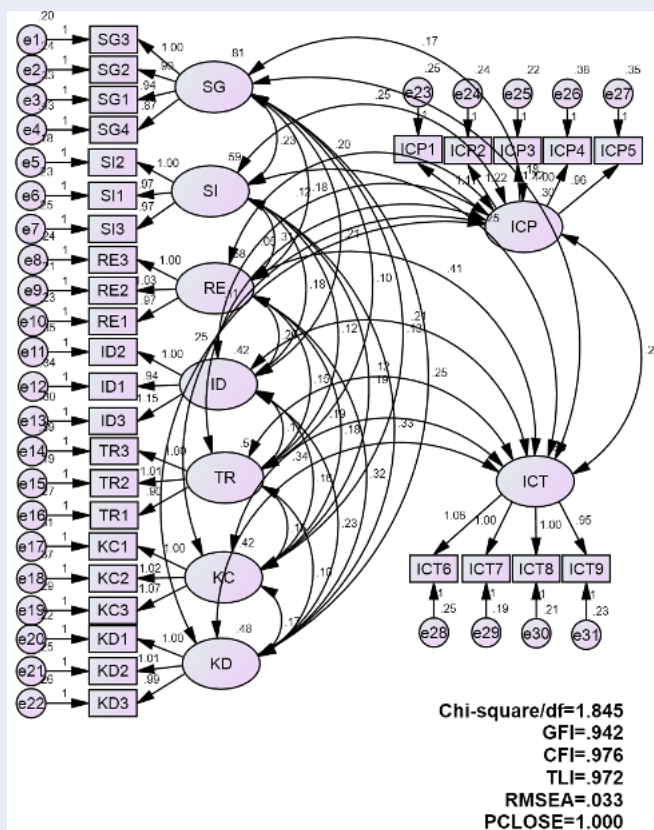


Figure 2: Testing model (Source: Data processing results from AMOS)

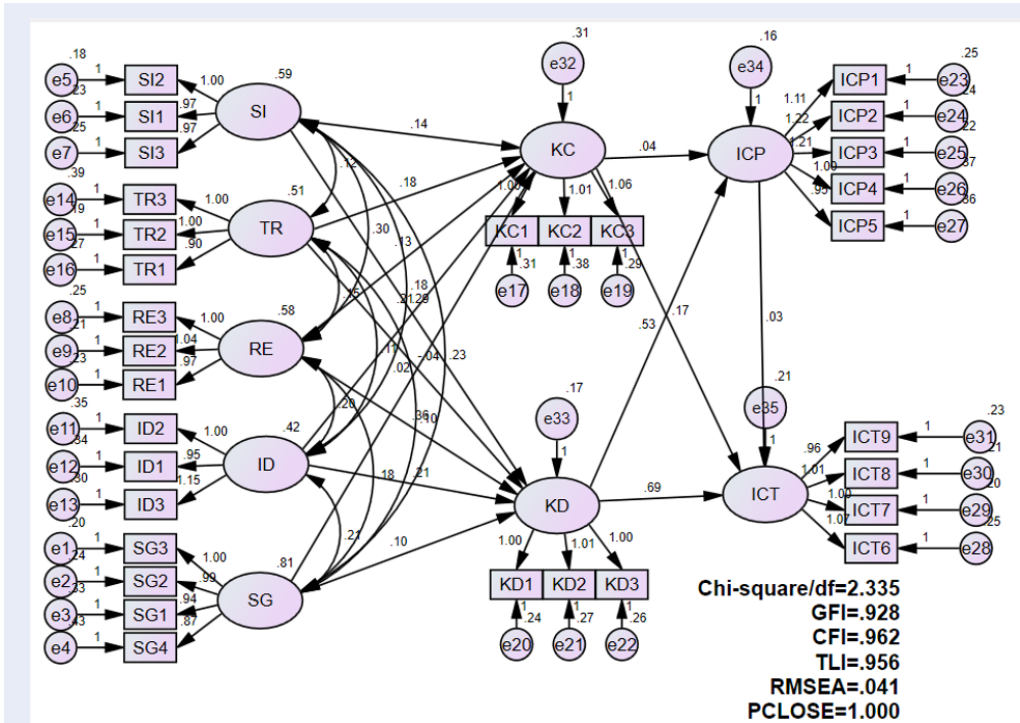


Figure 3: Results of SEM model (Source: Data processing results from AMOS)

Table 4: Standardized regressionweights in the SEM model (Source: Data processing results from AMOS)

Hypothesis	Relationship	Weight	S.E.	C.R.		Result
H1	KC <— SI	0.142	0.041	3.462	***	Accepted
H2	KD <— SI	0.289	0.033	8.725	***	Accepted
H3	KC <— TR	0.184	0.039	4.777	***	Accepted
H4	KD <— TR	-0.043	0.03	-1.461	0.144	Rejected
H5	KC <— RE	0.127	0.042	3.009	**	Accepted
H6	KD <— RE	0.358	0.035	10.252	***	Accepted
H7	KC <— ID	0.211	0.049	4.301	***	Accepted
H8	KD <— ID	0.211	0.039	5.447	***	Accepted
H9	KC <— SG	0.018	0.03	0.585	0.559	Rejected
H10	KD <— SG	0.102	0.024	4.251	***	Accepted
H11	ICP <— KC	0.044	0.032	1.384	**	Accepted
H12	ICP <— KD	0.534	0.039	13.673	***	Accepted
H13	ICT <— KC	0.175	0.037	4.675	***	Accepted
H14	ICT <— KD	0.691	0.054	12.822	***	Accepted
H15	ICT <— ICP	0.026	0.058	3.449	***	Accepted

The model should then be re-estimated and iteratively refined until all remaining variables demonstrate statistical significance ($P\text{-value} < 0.05$), ensuring that the findings accurately reflect the realities and constraints experienced by the target respondent group.

Results

The results indicate that social interaction, reciprocity, group identification, trust, and shared goals significantly influence knowledge collecting and donating knowledge, thereby enhancing the office staff's innovation capability. Social interaction, in particular, positively impacts both forms of knowledge sharing, suggesting that Vietnamese employees are more likely to exchange ideas in open, collaborative environments. Organizations increasingly support this through initiatives such as team-building activities, training programs, and seminars.

The study reveals several nuanced insights into the dynamics between social capital dimensions and knowledge sharing in Vietnamese SMEs. Notably, Trust among team members does not positively impact knowledge donating, although it does positively influence knowledge collecting. Additionally, trust helps reduce both tangible and intangible barriers between individuals, facilitating open communication about challenges and enabling employees to acquire new knowledge or enhance existing expertise. However, this study finds that the level of trust among staff within the same department or organization does not significantly promote mutual knowledge donation within Vietnamese office environments. This unexpected result may be explained by the generally low mutual trust in Vietnamese workplaces, primarily driven by competitive pressures related to job security, revenue targets, and individual contributions to organizational profit.

Reciprocity proves to be a strong motivator for knowledge sharing. When reciprocal norms are present, employees feel obliged to give back after receiving support, fostering a two-way exchange culture. Similarly, employees with a strong emotional connection to their organization—reflected in group identification—are more likely to share knowledge, driven by pride and a desire to contribute to collective success.

Shared goals support knowledge donating, as aligned objectives encourage cooperation and mutual support. These factors collectively strengthen both individual and organizational development.

Finally, the study confirms that knowledge sharing—donating and collecting—enhances innovation. Internal knowledge exchange is essential in competitive

Vietnamese enterprises, especially in the private sector. Organizations that foster a culture of collaboration and continuous learning, often supported by KPI systems, are better positioned for innovation and sustainable growth.

CONCLUSION

This study reaffirms that core dimensions of social capital—social interaction, trust, reciprocity, group identification, and shared goals—significantly influence knowledge donating and knowledge collecting behaviors, aligning with the foundational framework proposed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal³. The research uncovers important contextual nuances by applying and extending this framework in the relatively under-explored context of Vietnamese SMEs. Most notably, it challenges the prevailing assumption that trust uniformly promotes knowledge donating. The findings reveal that trust may facilitate knowledge collecting in organizational environments characterized by internal competition and low institutional trust but does not necessarily encourage knowledge donating.

Theoretically, this study contributes in two significant ways. First, it refines the Nahapiet and Ghoshal model by highlighting that the effects of social capital dimensions are not universally symmetrical. Specifically, it demonstrates that trust, often regarded as a universally positive driver of knowledge sharing, can exhibit differentiated impacts depending on socio-cultural and organizational conditions. This context-contingent insight calls for a more nuanced application of social capital theory in emerging and transitional economies, where informal norms and workplace dynamics may diverge from those in developed contexts.

Second, the study advances theoretical integration by employing a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach that connects social capital, knowledge sharing behaviors, and innovation outcomes. By empirically linking knowledge donating and collecting to individual and collective innovation capabilities⁴³, the study bridges micro-level behavioral constructs with macro-level organizational performance, offering a more holistic and granular understanding of how social capital drives innovation in SMEs.

Furthermore, the research underscores the pivotal role of reciprocal norms and shared goals in fostering a sustained knowledge-sharing culture. These findings enrich the theoretical discourse on social capital and knowledge management and lay the groundwork for adapting innovation-oriented SEM models to culturally and economically diverse organizational environments.

From a practical standpoint, the results emphasize the strategic value of cultivating social capital in the workplace. Organizations aiming to enhance innovation should promote interpersonal connectivity, shared vision, and mutual trust among employees. This can be achieved by fostering inclusive and collaborative cultures, implementing transparent communication strategies, and designing incentive systems recognizing and rewarding knowledge-sharing behaviors⁴⁴. In addition, ongoing internal training and development programs are essential to facilitate continuous knowledge flow and learning. Team-based rewards or individual recognition for consistent engagement in knowledge-sharing practices can reinforce mutual support and collective learning norms. Ultimately, for firms operating in dynamic and competitive environments, understanding and leveraging the strategic role of social capital is critical to unlocking innovation potential and sustaining organizational growth.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest in this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author Duong The Duy: Responsible for the content: research ideas, theoretical basis;

Author To Sanya Minh Kha: Responsible for the content: data investigation, data processing;

Author Tran Tien Quang: Responsible for the content: writing the article content.

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Mối quan hệ giữa vốn xã hội, chia sẻ kiến thức và năng lực đổi mới: Nghiên cứu trường hợp nhân viên văn phòng tại Việt Nam

Dương Thế Duy¹, Tô Sanya Minh Kha², Trần Tiến Quang^{3,*}



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TÓM TẮT

Nghiên cứu này phát triển và kiểm định thực nghiệm một mô hình lý thuyết xem xét mối quan hệ giữa vốn xã hội, chia sẻ kiến thức và năng lực đổi mới ở cả cấp độ cá nhân và tập thể trong số nhân viên văn phòng tại các doanh nghiệp vừa và nhỏ của Việt Nam. Dựa trên dữ liệu khảo sát từ 787 nhân viên và được phân tích bằng EFA, CFA và SEM, các phát hiện nhấn mạnh rằng các chiều hướng chính của vốn xã hội, bao gồm các mối quan hệ tương tác xã hội, lòng tin, chuẩn mực về sự có đi có lại, nhận dạng nhóm và mục tiêu chung, làm tăng đáng kể cả việc đóng góp kiến thức và thu thập kiến thức, do đó thúc đẩy năng lực đổi mới. Đáng chú ý, lòng tin đóng một vai trò phức tạp: nó tạo điều kiện thuận lợi đáng kể cho việc thu thập kiến thức. Nó làm giảm các rào cản giao tiếp nhưng không ảnh hưởng đáng kể đến việc đóng góp kiến thức, có thể là do lòng tin lẫn nhau thấp hình thành bởi áp lực cạnh tranh tại nơi làm việc. Bằng cách áp dụng lý thuyết vốn xã hội trong bối cảnh đổi mới của các doanh nghiệp vừa và nhỏ ở các nước đang phát triển, nghiên cứu này thúc đẩy những hiểu biết lý thuyết và đưa ra hướng dẫn thực tế để thúc đẩy văn hóa chia sẻ kiến thức hợp tác, thúc đẩy đổi mới.

Từ khóa: Vốn xã hội, Chia sẻ kiến thức, Năng lực đổi mới, Nhân viên văn phòng

¹Khoa Kinh tế - Tài chính, Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ - Tin học TP. Hồ Chí Minh, TP. Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam

²Thư viện, Học viện Phật giáo Việt Nam, TP. Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam

³Trường Đại học Kinh tế - Luật, Đại học Quốc gia TP.HCM

Liên hệ

Trần Tiến Quang, Trường Đại học Kinh tế - Luật, Đại học Quốc gia TP.HCM

Email: quangtt88.2018@gmail.com

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