



A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE RATE OF KNOWLEDGE EXPANSION AMONG PEOPLE BELONG TO DIFFERENT AREAS IN WEST MINGAL, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to estimate the knowledge expansion of people belong to different areas in India and then to compare the rate of knowledge expansion among different groups of the families belong to different area. The respondents for this study were 150 head of the families. A survey was conducted by using a questionnaire for information gathering about knowledge expansion. Standard t-test and χ^2 tests were used. The results of the study revealed that rate of knowledge expansion in rural area and rate of knowledge expansion in urban area is significantly different. It has been found from the results that the rate of knowledge expansion in urban area and rate of knowledge expansion in semi-urban area is not significantly different. The results of the study also revealed that the rate of knowledge expansion of the people in rural area is lower than the people belong to urban and semi-urban area both.

INTRODUCTION

Society is a dynamic organization, which changes according to change of socio-cultural factors, economic conditions, and education status and with the aspects of science and technology. But among these factors, the “floe of information” is vital for any social change. Thinkers agree that no change can take place without flow of information. Communication technology can play a vital role for this purpose. Due to the rapid change of communication technology like Television, Radio and most popularly, Computer and the Internet technology it is easy to acquire knowledge about different fields. Today use of computer is redefining the way we communicate, play, work and conduct our businesses. In modern time it is easy to acquire knowledge through internet system without having much effort. As a result we can find a system of expansion in the knowledge dimension. The knowledge expansion has significant impacts on our society and we can use it as a basic instrument to modify our society. But all sections of our country are not equally benefited by modern technology. As a result knowledge expansion has not spread over equally through all over India. A study was conducted to verify the propositions as stated above.

Review of literature

Lewlyn, L.R. Rodrigues (2004) conducted a study on “Knowledge Management (KM) practices in engineering institutes”. The study revealed that there is a significant

difference in the perception of KM performance dimensions in their respective organizations by the professionals from the IT sector and the teaching faculty from engineering institutes.

Fabrice Galia and Diego Legros (2004) conducted a study on “The knowledge creation, sharing and transferring process in French manufacturing firms in an innovation perspective”. The findings of the study were as follows:

Statistics support the hypothesis H₂. The results tend to prove that large firms, high technological firms and firms belonging to a group are more prone to adopt and use formal KM and HRM practices than other firms do.

The evidence generally supports hypothesis H₃, stating that systems of KM and HRM practices vary with firm-types.

The features support hypothesis H₅, stating that team-based work and internal alignment of KM and HRM practices including recruitments procedures, incentives, rewards, autonomy, common pool of knowledge and training form the core complementarities bundle and will be particularly strong. Kaushalesh Lal (2006) conducted a study to examines the intensity of the adoption of information and communication technologies in Jamaican Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SME) and their ability to use them in Megmenting performance of firms in his article “Consequences of the Adoption of Information and Communication Technologies in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Jamaica”. An analysis of data in neo-classical production function framework suggests that firms that adopted more advanced ICTs

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(Information and Communication Technologies) performed better than others that were users of low level of ICTs.

Eduardo G Manuel (2006) conducted a study on “Gap between the genders in Emerging Markets at the level of knowledge Management (KM)”. Countries like India, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan should define measures of economic policy for promotion of education for both genders: male and female.

The study revealed that the gap between the genders in Emerging Markets at the level of knowledge management that has shown who the best and poorest countries at this level are. So, we saw that Poland, Russian Federation and Hungary are the countries that are doing the best knowledge management in Emerging Markets, because these countries have high rates of adult alphabetization in both the genders. India, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are doing the poorest knowledge management as these countries have low rates of adult alphabetization in both the genders.

But it is important to refer to the countries that there are countries shown in this paper that have low GDP per capital values but high rates of adult alphabetization, visible in both the genders. So, we can conclude that poverty in Emerging Markets does not mean low adult instruction. Countries like India, Egypt, Saudi Arabi and Pakistan should define measures of economic policy for promotion of education for both the genders, i.e., without excluding the female gender.

Martin Andersson, Urban Grasjo and Charlie Karisson (2006) conducted a study to analyzes the relationship between regional growth and accessibility to knowledge resources in a cross-section of Swedish Municipalities in his article “Regional Growth and Accessibility to Knowledge Resources : A study of Swedish Municipalities”. The findings show that knowledge accessibility related to R&D has a tremendous impact on regional growth in municipalities belonging to a large functional region, but not essentially to largest municipality in the area. The paper also suggests that, increased knowledge accessibility between intra regions stimulates economic growth.

Ildio Tomas Lopes (2007) conducted a study to explore the typology of information (voluntary and non-voluntary, financial and non-financial) effectively released to stakeholders through their corporate websites in his article “Towards an Electronic Knowledge Management Culture”. The major findings of the study were that a positive correlation was obtained between sales growth and active corporate website. However, websites are used specially for release of information about company contacts and companies’ products and services. Information dissemination to stakeholders is still in a primary stage. Probably, the EKMC (Electronic Knowledge Management Culture) will be consolidated only in the next few years.

Krishnaveni and Senthil Raja (2007) conducted a study on the impact of knowledge management life cycle activities on the knowledge benefits of IT organizations, the latter randomly selected from the Software Technology Park of India (STPI)

list during 2006, satisfying a certain criteria. The findings of the study was that the hypothesis, the higher the KM life cycle activities of a firm, the higher will be the knowledge benefits of the IT organizations’, was accepted, as the KM life cycle activities were found to be highly significant ($\beta = 0.500$, $t = 4.749$). The result proves the presumption that the KM life cycle activities of IT organizations have an impact on the KM benefits.

Bharathi Kamath (2007) conducted a study to measures and evaluates the value added to a firm by its Intellectual capital (IC) using a concept of Value Added Intellectual Coefficient (VAICTM) in his article “Value Added by Intellectual Capital : A Study of the Indian Pharmaceutical Industry”. This study is limited to select firms in the Indian Pharmaceutical industry for the period from 1996-97 to 2005-06.

The findings of the study were that Cipla Ltd., leads all the pharmaceutical industries in almost all years of period of study, with respect to the overall ranking on the value added intellectual coefficient. The firm which follows is Sun Pharma, DRL and Ranbaxy Ltd., GSK and Aurobindo Pharma are way behind others. A major contribution towards VAIC of all firms is coming from this component, proving the hypothesis again that human capital is among the most important of all capital in these firms. The position of value added through capital expended in the pharmaceutical industry of the period of study shows that Cipla and GSK strongly compete with each other to gain the first position. Aurobindo Pharma lags behind even in this component as in case of other. It can be concluded that value addition needs to be understood from a fresh perspective in all knowledge firms. The firms that are successful financially may not be so when ranked as per the VAIC, which takes into account the intangibles while evaluating the firm’s performance.

Keeping the above findings in view and to bridge the gaps of knowledge the present study was conducted.

Objectives of the Study

In the study the basic objective was to compare the rates of knowledge expansion among different groups of families belong to different areas in our country

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Considering the nature of the problem under investigation and the nature of the data for the study, survey method has been adopted for collecting the data. Thus the data are primary in nature. All the data were collected in the year 2010.

Tools Used

Information for the study was gathered by interviewing the head of the concerned families. Knowledge Inflation Assessment Scale was used to measure the rate of knowledge inflation among the people belong to different areas in the country.

Population and Sample

To satisfy the objectives of the study different groups of samples were necessary. All the people of Purba Medinipore district constituted as the population for the study. The sample consisted of 150 families. Three areas had been chosen from the district such as urban area, semi-urban area and rural area. From each area 50 families had been chosen randomly. Haldia had been chosen as urban area where as Contai had been chosen as semi-urban area. Five villages from Mahishadal block had been chosen as rural area.

Hypotheses of the Present Study

- H_{O1} : Rate of knowledge expansion and different sections of the population are significantly independent to each other.
- H_{O2} : There is no significance difference between the rate of knowledge expansion of two groups of families belong to urban area and Semi-urban area.
- H_{O3} : There is no significance difference between the rate of knowledge expansion of two groups of families belong to Semi-urban area and rural area.
- H_{O4} : There is no significance difference as between the rate of knowledge expansion of two groups of families belong to urban area and rural area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interpretation

Result indicates that the χ^2 value is significant at .01 levels that mean, the null hypothesis (H_{O1}) on the assumption, that the variable are independent to each other is rejected. From χ^2 results, it may be said that the knowledge expansion and areas of the families where they belong are interdependent.

Table 1. Showing the distribution of families with respect to knowledge expansion & different areas where they belong

Knowledge expansion	Areas			Total
	Urban	Semi-urban	Rural	
High	24	19	2	45
Average	23	21	16	60
Low	3	10	32	45
Total	50	50	50	150

$\chi^2 = 54.07$, $df = 4$
 For 4 df χ^2 at .05 level = 13.28
 Obtained value 49.57 > 13.28
 So, the χ^2 value is significant at .01 levels.

Interpretation

Table 2 indicates that the value of 't' is not significant at .05 level, so the null hypothesis (H_{O2}) on the assumption that no true difference exists, is accepted. Result leads to infer that the Rate of knowledge expansion of two groups of families belongs to urban area and Semi-urban area does not differ significantly.

Table 2. Showing the comparison between the rate of knowledge expansion of families with respect to their area where they belong

Area	N	Rate of knowledge expansion	SE%	df	t	Level of significance
Urban	50	47.46	9.97	98	0.32	NS
Semi-urban	50	44.23				

Table 3. Showing the comparison between the rates of knowledge expansion of families with respect to their area where they belong

Area	N	Rate of knowledge expansion	SE%	df	t	Level of significance
Semi-urban	50	44.23	8.80	98	4.08	0.01
Rural	50	8.31				

Interpretation

Table 3 indicates that the value of 't' is significant at .01 levels, so the null hypothesis (H_{O3}) on the assumption that no true difference exists, is rejected. Result leads to infer that the rates of knowledge expansion of two groups of families belong to Semi-urban area and rural area differ significantly.

Table 4. Showing the comparison between the rate of knowledge expansion of families with respect to their area where they belong

Area	N	Rate of knowledge expansion	SE%	df	t	Level of significance
Urban	50	47.46	8.97	98	4.36	0.01
Rural	50	8.31				

Interpretation

Table 4 indicates that the value of 't' is significant at .01 level, so the null hypothesis (H_{O4}) on the assumption that no true difference exists, is rejected. Result leads to infer that the rate of knowledge expansion of two groups of families belongs to urban area and rural area differ significantly.

Conclusion

Keeping the findings of the study in view following conclusions can be generalized:

- (i) There is a relationship between rate of knowledge expansion and different area in our country.
- (ii) There is an inequality in the dimension of knowledge expansion in our country.
- (iii) The rate of knowledge expansion in urban families is significantly higher than families belong to rural area.
- (iv) The rate of knowledge expansion in Semi-urban families is significantly higher than families belong to rural area.
- (v) There is no significant different between rate of knowledge expansion in Urban area and Semi-urban area.

India today is striving out in to the modern world. We are looking ahead to new technology, new types of employment and a new dynamism in our economic growth. But we must pay attention to the scenario of knowledge expansion prevailing in rural areas of the country. Our government has

taken many steps to make our country as knowledge economy but this is not possible to pay more attention in rural areas where huge people has been living. Government can provide new technology such as low cost Web-TV, and opportunities for technological leapfrogging in connectivity, by directly investing in satellite-based communication system in rural areas.

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