

How Does Knowledge Sharing Within Communities of Practice Drive Innovation?

Anna Kleynhans and Geraldine Hamill

Technological University Dublin, Ireland

anyafrydrych@yahoo.co.uk

Geraldine.Hamill@TUDublin.ie

Abstract: The link between Communities of Practice (CoP) and innovation is a topic that needs to be explored in more detail in organisations and how knowledge sharing within CoPs drives innovation. Knowledge is recognised as a critical resource in organisations that creates competitive advantage. Knowledge sharing practices and behaviours strengthen organisational capability to innovate, however, knowledge sharing does not come naturally to most individuals. A systematic literature review of 24 peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2025 identified three thematic areas that explore relationship between knowledge sharing in CoPs and innovation. The three key themes are 1) tacit knowledge sharing and its link to innovation, 2) knowledge sharing barriers and facilitators and 3) the role of CoPs as a knowledge sharing platform that drives innovation. The findings highlight that tacit knowledge is deeply embedded in individual experience and intuition. It plays a critical role in driving innovation through processes such as learning by doing, interaction and reflection. Motivational factors, such as reward systems, have also been identified in the literature as factors that can either facilitate or hinder knowledge sharing behaviours. The review also identified organisational climate and leadership behaviours as facilitators and/or barriers. Furthermore, CoPs emerge as valuable, low-cost platforms for informal learning and tacit knowledge sharing, strengthening relationships and supporting innovation. However, a gap remains in the literature regarding how tacit knowledge within CoPs drives innovation as few empirical studies have explored this area. This study contributes to the Knowledge Management field by consolidating current insights and emphasising the need for deeper investigation into how CoPs can be leveraged as a knowledge sharing platform that drives innovation.

Keywords: Tacit knowledge sharing, Knowledge sharing and innovation, Knowledge sharing in communities of practice, Communities of practice and innovation, PRISMA

1. Introduction

Tacit knowledge sharing is recognised to play a vital contributor to organisational competitive advantage. CoPs have emerged as a key element of an organisation's knowledge strategy, enabling the social process through which tacit knowledge is shared (Nonaka and Konno 1998). Despite this recognition of importance there remains a lack of research that identifies the factors that contribute to successful knowledge sharing in CoPs and how they contribute to driving innovation (Pohjola 2015; Aljuwaiber 2016; Ji et al, 2017). It is this identified gap that forms the basis and rationale for this study. This study will add to the existing body of knowledge and literature on knowledge sharing processes in CoPs and their link to innovation.

2. Systematic Review Methodology

This literature review utilizes a Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) approach to systematically examine the role of tacit knowledge sharing within Communities of Practice (CoPs) and its contribution to organisational innovation. Drawing on peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025, this analysis explores current research on tacit knowledge sharing, knowledge sharing facilitators and barriers, and CoPs as a knowledge sharing platform that drives innovation. The review establishes that CoPs provide a valuable social and low-cost structure for fostering informal learning, strengthening relationships, and facilitating tacit knowledge sharing, however, a significant gap persists in literature regarding the factors that enhance tacit knowledge shared within CoPs that drives innovation. Consequently, this systematic review aims to consolidate existing findings and highlight areas for future research in this domain.

2.1 Search Process

This systematic literature review (SLR) adopts the PRISMA framework (Prisma 2025) to identify and analyse literature regarding tacit knowledge sharing processes in CoPs as a knowledge sharing platform for innovation. The search and selection of records were conducted solely by the researcher, guided by the PRISMA checklist to ensure transparency and rigour. The researcher identified relevant databases for journal articles related to tacit knowledge sharing, communities of practice and innovation. This search was conducted over a period of 4 days. From September 8 – September 11, 2025, articles were found based on the inclusion and exclusion

criteria identified in section 2.4 of this paper. The primary databases consulted were Scopus and ProQuest. Scopus was selected for its comprehensive coverage of scientific literature, such as scholarly journal articles, conference proceedings, books. ProQuest was chosen for its wide range of scholarly journals worldwide. Both databases offer advanced and extensive search capabilities, including the selection of specific journals and/or specific domain areas. In addition, both offer export functionality which enabled the researcher to find relevant content faster based on article title and abstract section. For these reasons, Google Scholar was excluded from the search process.

The search strategy employed the following keywords Boolean operators: “Tacit knowledge” AND “innovation”, “Knowledge sharing” AND “employee”, “Knowledge enablers” AND “Leadership”, “Communities of practice” AND “Innovation”. The search strings used are broad in scope, yet specific to create a focus around the scope of this research project.

2.2 Selection Process

Peer-reviewed articles were selected to adhere to quality standards. The search was guided by a journal quality list, as well as journal websites such as Emerald, Sage, Taylor and Francis, and Elsevier. Article selection focussed on journals that contained the following keywords in their titles in the ProQuest database: Knowledge management, Innovation management, Technology management. However, any article relevant to the research project that was found in a journal other than the selected list, the researcher included the article. The Scopus database does not have a filter selection for journals, therefore the researcher had to rely on the selection of subject areas instead. The following subject areas were selected: Business, Management and Accounting; Computer Science; Engineering.

The PRISMA flow diagram was used to guide the refinement of the article selection. The first stage, involved identifying and manually removing duplicate articles, using Excel filtering function. The second stage involved screening of article titles for relevance based on keywords such as knowledge sharing, employee knowledge sharing, communities of practice and innovation. The final stage involved reviewing titles and abstracts to further refine the selection. This process resulted in a final sample of twenty-four articles for the systematic literature review. Figure 1 depicts the PRISMA flow diagram and Table 1 lists the journals in which the selected articles were published.

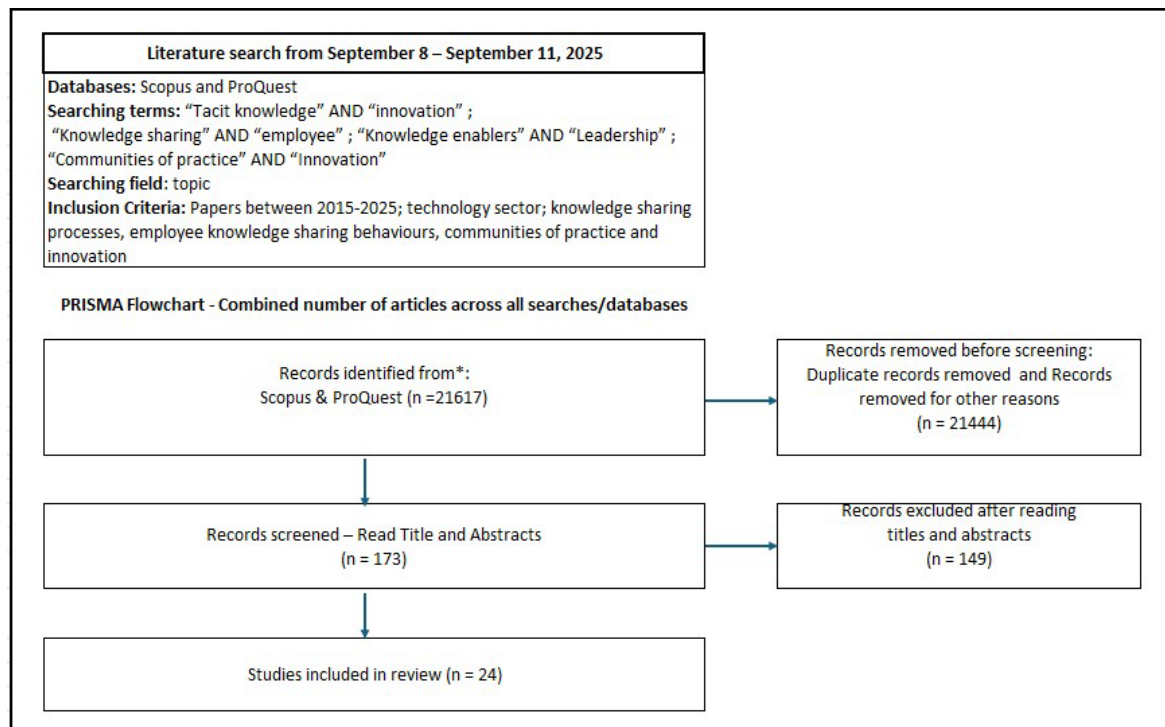


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow diagram

Table 1: List of Journals – Article search results

Journal / Conference Proceedings	Number of Articles
European Journal of Innovation Management	2
International Journal of Knowledge Management	1
Journal of Knowledge Management	4
Personnel Review	1
Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management (EJKM)	1
Technological Forecasting and Social Change	1
VINE Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems	2
International Journal of Information Management	1
Journal of Business Research	1
ICICKM Conference Proceedings	1
Eurasian Journal of Management and Social Sciences	1
HICSS Conference Proceedings	1
Technology Analysis and Strategic Management	1
Journal of Innovation Management	1
Problems and Perspectives in Management	1
Project Management Journal	1
Systems	1
Knowledge Management Research and Practice	1
Information and Organisation	1

The literature review incorporated the seminal works by Polanyi, Drucker, Nonaka, Argyris and Schon and Wenger whose pioneering theories on tacit knowledge and communities of practice form the foundational for the research domain.

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To capture the most recent research on the topic of knowledge sharing processes in communities of practice the review included literature published between 2015-2025. The primary domain focus was the technology sector however, in some cases, articles covered more than one study and spanned multiple sectors were included if the content and findings were relevant to knowledge sharing processes, employee knowledge sharing behaviours, communities of practice and innovation. Articles associated with leadership as an enabler of knowledge sharing was also included. All research methodologies: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods were considered.

The exclusion criteria encompassed articles and papers published prior to 2015, non peer reviewed and outdated books and articles that were not relevant to the broader technology sector. Papers and articles that were not accessible through the institution login and those not published in English were also omitted.

2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

A bibliometric analysis was conducted to map the annual publication trends between 2015-2025. The distribution of articles identified per year is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

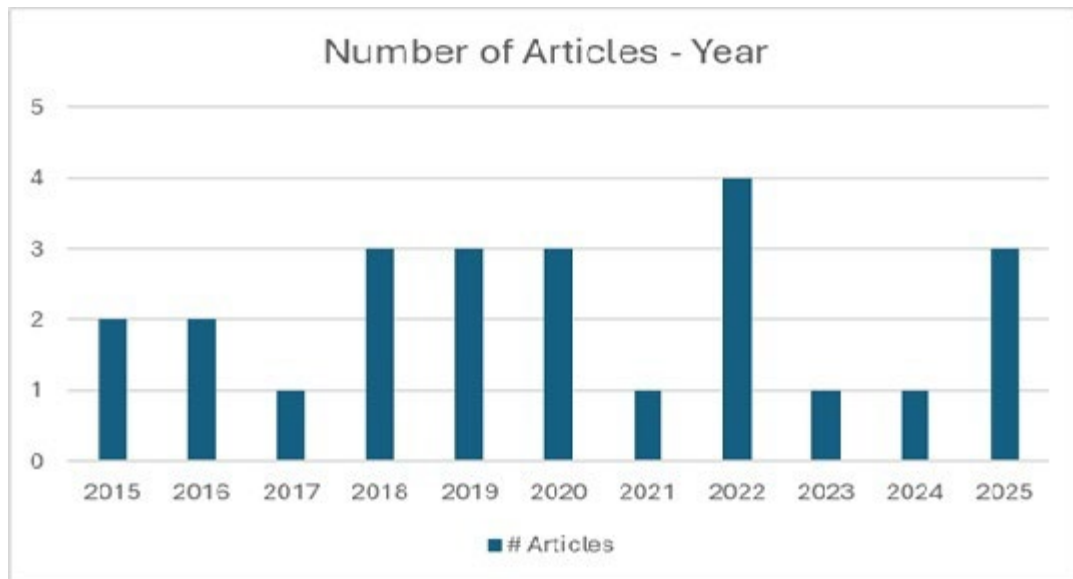


Figure 2: Articles found per year

The selected articles were subsequently organized according to major themes found in the content. This classification of the articles helped structured articles that were published per theme and identify under explored areas. Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of the themes.

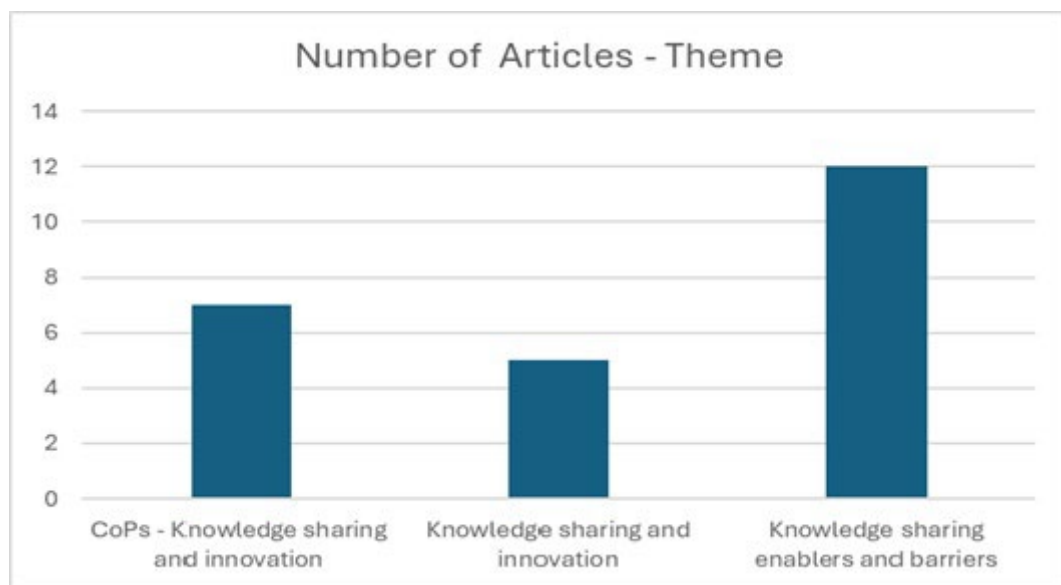


Figure 3: Article count per theme

Based on the search results, several conclusions can be drawn. First, although the topic of knowledge sharing has been broadly researched in the context of enablers and barriers, limited research has been conducted in the context of knowledge sharing and innovation. Second, within the last ten years, few studies have specifically investigated the link between knowledge sharing processes within COP and their link to innovation. The selected articles for this literature review ranged in terms of study design from qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Table 2 below presents a breakdown by study method.

Table 2: Study Method in articles - breakdown

Study Method	% Breakdown
Quantitative	54.20%
Qualitative	33.3%
Mixed Methods	12.50%

It is evident from the table that quantitative analysis is the prominent methodology surpassing both qualitative and mixed methods approaches. To analyse the content of each journal article a data extraction method was applied, breaking down each study into its constituent parts (Saunders, 2023). A Thematic Analysis Grid (Anderson et al., 2015) was created to structure notes, key themes, and points made by the article authors.

Figure 4 illustrates an example of how data was extracted using Thematic Analysis Grid framework. Articles and authors are listed in rows, and key themes are noted in columns. This facilitated a comparative analysis of themes across the literature, ensuring the identification of the most relevant and significant concepts. No quantitative meta-analysis was conducted; therefore, no effect measures (e.g. odds ratios, mean differences) were applied.

Author	Problem	Tacit Knowledge Types/Definitions	Tacit Knowledge Transfer and Knowledge Creation and Sharing	Types of tacit knowledge that inhibits innovations
Stokvik, H., D.J. Adriaenssen/J.-A. Johannessen 2016	We don't know how tacit knowledge, organizational learning and innovation are linked. Research question: What is the relation between tacit knowledge, organizational learning and innovation? Methodology: Conceptual generalizing. Purpose: To create a link between tacit knowledge, organizational learning and innovation. The authors develop a theory, i.e., a system of propositions related to how do different types of tacit knowledge and organizational learning influence innovation Organizational learning and innovation are dependent on access to knowledge (King, 2009, pp. 1-13; Grillitsch & Rekers, 2015). This means knowledge that is external to the business, as well as the	The research of the authors shows that tacit knowledge may be said to have three faces: one conservative that limits the continuous improvement process, a second that guards an organization against imitation, and a third that promotes innovation the development of tacit knowledge may be said to always consist of three elements: knowing, wanting to know and the practical context; It is by becoming intimate with phenomena or problems – “dwelling in them” (Polanyi, 2009, p. ; In other words, it is intimacy and extensive experience of a phenomenon in its context that constitute the approach to tacit knowledge and thereby also a foundation for learning. It is precisely this sensitivity, attained through intimacy by application and execution, that leads to the development and transferral of tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge exists, says Molander (1993, p. 40), in “the action and the judgements that are carried out in relation to the action”. The word ‘and’ is crucially important here: the action and the judgements. It is not only the action or the judgements by which tacit knowledge may be understood, but also the reflection that is made before, during and after the action. This links tacit knowledge to the learning process.	Accordingly, the basis for Polanyi's concept of tacit knowledge is that we know more than we are able to communicate to others in the form of information. Examples of adequate methods may be mechanisms that release and combine explicit and tacit knowledge. When tacit knowledge is to be transferred from one person to another, this cannot be done completely by means of either language or images (Cannon, 2002). The transmission of tacit knowledge to an apprentice is an active creative process; it is not one of passive transmission from master to apprentice (Polanyi, 2009, p. 6). The process of apprenticeship is dependent in part on the apprentice themselves gradually finding out knowledge that the master is unable to transmit, but which becomes apparent through the situation/context at any particular time (Cannon, 2002). This active process means that the tacit knowledge possessed by the apprentice becomes different to that of the master. The apprentice integrates this tacit knowledge into their existing knowledge-base, and makes it their own. Tacit knowledge will comprise a proportion of the knowledge-base in most occupations	there are two types of tacit knowledge: rules of thumb and holistic causal understanding, both of which can slow down innovation (Johannessen & Olsen, 2011). This is because these types are closely linked to the rules, procedures and analysis; they are, thus, bound by the grip of history and experience, and operate as mechanisms that slow down the field of change

Figure 4: Thematic Analysis Grid

2.5 Quality Assessment

The researcher employed the PRISMA process to ensure that all components and methods for this literature review are transparent and fully described. PRISMA flow diagrams outline the results for each search related to a specific theme/topic in line with the research objectives.

3. Literature Review Findings

This systematic literature review examines the processes and behaviours underlying tacit knowledge sharing, concentrating on its role in driving innovation outcomes through CoPs. Knowledge sharing is acknowledged as one of the most critical and widely studied processes in the field of knowledge management, attracting the attention of both researchers and practitioners (Drucker 1992). This interest stems from a shift in organisational strategy, whereby knowledge is recognised as a critical resource, rather than conventional tangible assets (Drucker 1992).

While knowledge sharing is recognised to be vital in developing competitive advantage within organisations managers often find it to be the most difficult practice to promote because knowledge sharing does not come naturally to most individuals (Wang and Hou 2015). However, innovation fundamentally depends on knowledge sharing, which enables the design of services, products, business models, skills and information. One of the hallmarks of innovation is value creation, which is made possible through effective sharing of knowledge and organisations that encourage knowledge sharing also strengthen their innovation capabilities (Salehi and Alanbari 2024). Research shows that knowledge is of no value until it is shared and used (Kaushal and Nyoni, 2025). In addition, research suggests that knowledge sharing behaviours significantly impact employee performance and employees who share knowledge with their colleagues are more likely to generate innovative ideas (Wang 2025).

The literature review is divided into three themes based on the data extraction method detailed previously. Theme 1. The role of tacit knowledge in driving innovation; Theme 2. Knowledge sharing facilitators and barriers and Theme 3. Communities of practice as a knowledge sharing platform for innovation.

3.1 The Role of Tacit Knowledge in Innovation

There is a common theme in the reviewed literature regarding the role of tacit knowledge sharing and innovation. While knowledge is recognised as a critical organisational resource, however, it is specifically through sharing, with others, that tacit knowledge becomes a source of a competitive advantage. For organisations to sustain innovative and competitiveness they must capture and leverage their knowledge assets. This often entails innovating through the pursuit of new knowledge or discovering novel applications for their existing knowledge (Kucharska and Erickson 2023; Perez-Luno et al, 2018; Stokvik et al, 2016). Scholarly authors have explored how tacit knowledge sharing influences innovation from different perspectives. Stokvik et al (2016), focussed on understanding how tacit knowledge development, organisational learning and innovation are linked. They proposed a typology, linking organisation learning and its influence on innovation to tacit knowledge. Perez-Luno et al (2018), focussed on the nature of knowledge that is tacit vs explicit and the process of knowledge exchange and combination. Empirical research conducted by Kucharska and Erickson (2023) showed how tacit knowledge is developed and examined through both “learning by doing” and “learning by interaction”, which in turn leads to the willingness of an individual to share their knowledge and as a result of this tacit knowledge sharing it may lead to product/service innovation. “Learning by doing” was identified as one of the tacit knowledge acquisition methods that comes from employee experiences such as observation, simulation or experimentation. Another method called ‘learning by interaction’ relies on shared learning experiences such as thinking aloud, opinion giving, storytelling, brainstorming. Stokvik et al. (2016), argue that tacit knowledge is developed through extensive experience and intimacy working with problems and this act forms the foundation for learning. The authors outline three processes connected to tacit knowledge that enable learning. Process 1: Action, which is linked to the execution of activities, integration, and transfer of tacit knowledge. Process 2: Reflection is essential if learning is to be achieved and Process 3: Interaction is viewed from a perspective of interacting with a problem first, and then interacting with the individuals who possess the knowledge of the problem (Argyris and Schon 1978)

According to Stokvik et al., (2016) action, reflection, and interaction are key processes in developing, sharing, and integrating tacit knowledge. These processes require relationships built on trust and mutual support. Stokvik et al., (2016) highlight that when people feel safe and encouraged, they are more confident in their interactions, which strengthens the flow of knowledge and makes these processes even more effective (Stokvik et al., 2016). Tacit knowledge is also viewed from three aspects according to Kucharska and Erickson (2018). There are three aspects of tacitness: a hidden practical layer, a reflective tacit layer, and a demonstrated tacit layer. These layers range from being easier to explain and closer to explicit knowledge to being virtually impossible to explain. This suggests that knowledge exists on a continuum, with explicit knowledge at one end and tacit knowledge at the other. Tacit knowledge is more difficult to articulate because it sits on a more ‘intangible continuum’. It is unstructured, based on personal experience, and more easily shared person-to-person rather than through centralised organisational systems. As knowledge becomes more structured and defined (explicit), it is more easily shared through centralised systems; therefore, it is on the opposite continuum of tacit knowledge. This aligns with the perspective of Nonaka and von Krogh (2009). Terhorst et al (2018) expanded tacit knowledge concepts, stating that knowledge sharing cannot be mandated but happens voluntarily or through free will. Because sharing tacit knowledge is largely ‘an act of volition’, autonomous motivation could be a reliable predictor of tacit knowledge sharing (Polanyi, 1966). Furthermore, the scholars recognised that tacit knowledge is not transferable as such but is interpreted within a specific context through face-to-face interactions (Nonaka 1994). The development of personal tacit knowledge in organisations can raise productivity to a higher level compared to competitors because tacit knowledge cannot be purchased; it has to be developed inside an organisation. Knowledge creation through sharing is considered an effective and efficient form of achieving successful innovations (Stokvik et al, 2016; Perez-Luno et al, 2018). Similarly, Perez-Luno et al (2018) highlight the importance of knowledge exchange and combination. The scholars explain that companies can only create new knowledge—and use it to innovate and stay ahead of competitors - when employees are able to share and combine what they know.

3.2 Knowledge Sharing – Facilitators and Barriers

Many scholars have explored knowledge sharing in the context of motivations and behaviours. For example, Wang and Hou (2015) examined the influence of various types of motivations – autonomy-oriented and control-oriented motivations—on employees’ knowledge sharing behaviours, referencing self-determination theory (SDT). SDT proposes that human behaviours may be encouraged not only by externally induced incentives, called controlled motivation, but also by internally evoked incentives, known as autonomous motivation. Controlled motivation leads to performing behaviours that explicitly contribute to self-care needs

and benefits under pressure or necessity to achieve a desirable outcome. In contrast, individuals feel autonomously motivated when they perceive self-determination in selecting their objectives freely based on self-interests, curiosity, or care (Wang and Hou 2015). The external/controlled motivating factors include reward systems, formal or informal evaluations from others, and status within significant groups, and the internal/autonomous motivating factors include self-interest, enjoyment, and selfless care for other parties (Wang and Hou, 2015). Mahmood and Toker (2022) posit that people generally have a need to interact with other people, which is known as social motivation. The authors found that people are driven by a need for rewards and reinforcement, which encourages them to emphasise their knowledge-sharing behaviour and knowledge production. Empirical research conducted by Wang and Hou (2015) found that hard and soft rewards influenced knowledge sharing behaviours. Hard rewards are associated with employees obtaining explicit outcomes such as promotions, financial rewards, and reciprocity. Soft rewards are associated with employees' expectations of achieving implicit outcomes, such as personal reputation and relationships with other employees. Interestingly, Wang and Hou (2015) highlighted that soft rewards were more important to individuals than hard rewards. Similarly, Kushal and Nyoni (2025) explored knowledge sharing in various dimensions, such as organisational performance outcomes, trust, collaborative culture, and leadership support. According to the scholars, rewards (e.g. monetary – bonuses or non-monetary - certificates, promotions, and gifts other than money) have been established among several knowledge sharing facilitators. Rewards act as a necessary strategy to recognise employee accomplishments (Kushal and Nyoni, 2025). Monetary and non-monetary rewards make those who have used their intellectual property for the benefit of the organisation feel recognised and honoured for their contributions. However, it was also established that despite the provision of rewards to employees, it is not automatic that those rewards facilitate knowledge sharing behaviour at all times (Kushal and Nyoni 2025). Furthermore, Malik (2022) examined emotional intelligence and tacit knowledge sharing that could promote innovative behaviour at work. Malik (2022) recognised knowledge sharing as a voluntary and prosocial behaviour that people use to share their knowledge with others. In addition, Malik (2022) showed how two dimensions of emotional intelligence, pride and empathy, positively impacted employees' eagerness and willingness to share knowledge.

Knowledge sharing must also be discussed in the context of barriers. It is important to acknowledge that organisations often find it difficult to facilitate effective knowledge sharing practices among employees. Some scholarly thinkers indicated that this is due to human factors, institutional complexities, and the sticky nature of knowledge itself (Wang and Hou 2015). According to Liu and Liu (2008), the sticky nature of knowledge makes it difficult to share because it is embedded in individuals' brains; therefore, it can be slow, costly, and uncertain. Achieving effective knowledge sharing practices relies on an individual's willingness to invest time and effort into the process. Salehi and Alanbari (2024) posit that companies must increase their knowledge through knowledge sharing practices to enhance their competitive advantage and drive efficient innovation.

Research also acknowledges that barriers to knowledge sharing must be identified. Organisational rigidity and insufficient resources may act as barriers to organisational performance. Goh et al (2020) argued that organisational factors play a significant role in initiating or discouraging knowledge sharing behaviour. Institutional structures have been considered as key barriers to knowledge sharing.

3.3 Communities of Practice – Knowledge Sharing and Innovation

Knowledge has become the key to success in the global economy. People can share knowledge through a variety of online sharing and discussion tools. A CoP is a popular tool for knowledge sharing with the ability to share tacit knowledge (Liu and Chen 2018). The term community of practice was first coined by Lave and Wenger (1991, p.98) as 'an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means in their lives and for their community'. Despite the proliferation of CoPs in many organisations, many fail because of members' low willingness to share knowledge (Lie and Chen 2018). Ji et al (2017), argue that CoPs are an efficient and low cost route to promote innovation performance, however, few papers talk about the mechanism and the relationship between CoP and innovation performance. There are also insufficient empirical studies that have examined the role of CoPs in community activities, such as fostering the innovation process (Aljuwaiber 2016).

In the rapidly changing and competitive global market environment, organisations must promote innovation and improve their creative capacity to gain a competitive advantage, which requires them to absorb and integrate various knowledge and skills (Ji et al, 2017). In CoPs, members share their experiences, skills, and explanations. This type of knowledge sharing is not always covered by a traditional organisation's hierarchy. When an organisation requires constant innovation, this system can compensate for the drawbacks of

traditional organisational learning (Ji et al, 2017). According to Aljuwaiber (2016), CoPs have three dimensions. Dimension one: mutual engagement, which refers to the extent to which members interact with one another and form their own relationships and culture. Dimension two: joint enterprise refers to the common purpose that binds people together and builds relationships that enable them to work on a specific interest. Dimension three: shared repertoire which refers to the continual development of the community, through which members produce sources over time through participation (these resources include, for example, procedures, techniques, forms, stories, tools and concepts). Pohjola (2015) argues that the sharing of tacit knowledge requires close involvement and cooperation, network relationships, face-to-face contacts, shared understanding and trust. Tacit knowledge also requires informal learning processes, such as storytelling, conversation, and coaching, which CoPs provide.

Research indicates that the function of a CoP is twofold: (1) CoPs promote knowledge sharing and (2) CoPs improve the performance of individuals or organisations. It helps to promote performance at the individual, group, and organizational levels by reducing the learning curve, avoiding overlapping investments in new products and services, improving employees' working experience, and accumulating professional talent for the organisation (Ji et al, 2017). To reap the full benefits of CoPs, they need to be properly understood, deployed, and supported. CoPs cannot be conceived and supported in the same way as other organisational initiatives because they lack formal structures, standardised protocols, and performance measurements. Organisations must create conducive environments for employees to voluntarily participate and include other members of the community in their pursuit of knowledge sharing and organisational learning (Venkatraman and Venkatraman 2018).

4. In Conclusion

The findings of this systematic literature review demonstrate that while tacit knowledge sharing is widely acknowledged as a critical driver of organisational innovation, the mechanisms through which CoPs enable this practice remains insufficiently explored. The reviewed studies consistently highlight that tacit knowledge is gained through experience and social interaction. CoPs are recognised in the literature as one of the low-cost tools where knowledge sharing occurs. Yet, despite this recognition, empirical research rarely examines how knowledge sharing within CoPs most effectively translates knowledge sharing into innovation outcomes. Three key gaps emerge as most important. First, the actual practices of knowledge sharing within CoPs such as storytelling, conversation or coaching are not well examined in the context of being linked to innovation. Second, there is lack of theoretical as well as empirically validated studies that clearly demonstrate the link between knowledge sharing within CoPs and innovation, leaving organisations without clarity on the value of CoPs and how they contribute to innovation capabilities. Third, while knowledge sharing can be considered common practice among individuals, motivational and organisational factors in the context of CoP dynamics remain poorly understood. Future research should focus on empirical studies that capture knowledge sharing frameworks, flows and processes through which the link between CoP and innovation can be established and innovative outcomes for organisations can be clearly measured. This will advance both theory and practice.

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank my supervisor Geraldine Hamill for providing invaluable support throughout my Master's project journey.

Ethics Declaration: No ethical clearance was required for this paper.

AI Declaration: No AI tools were used as part of the PRISMA and systematic literature review process

References

- Aljuwaiber, A. (2016) "Communities of practice as an initiative for knowledge sharing in business organisations: a literature review", *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol 20, No. 4, pp. 731–748. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-12-2015-0494>
- Anderson, D., Lees, R. and Avery, B. (2015) "Reviewing the literature using the thematic analysis grid", in *Proceedings of the European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies*, Malta, June.
- Argyris, C. and Schön, D. (1978) *Organisational learning: a theory of action perspective*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Drucker, P.F. (1992) "The new society of organisations", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol 95, No. 5, pp. 95–105.
- Goh, S., Jayaraman, K., Mostafiz, I. and Leow, Y.M. (2020) "The effect of organisational climate on employees' creative performance through knowledge sharing behaviour", *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol 18, No. 1, pp. 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.34190/EJKM.18.01.001>

- Ji, H., Sui, Y.-T. and Suo, L.-L. (2017) "Understanding innovation mechanism through the lens of communities of practice (CoP)", *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, Vol 118, pp. 205–212.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2017.02.021>
- Kaushal, S. and Nyoni, A.M. (2025) "Why do rewards fail to motivate knowledge sharing behavior among employees?", *VINE Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems*, Vol 55, No. 1, pp. 34–55.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/VJKMS-06-2022-0202>
- Kucharska, W. and Erickson, G.S. (2023) "Tacit knowledge acquisition and sharing, and its influence on innovations: a Polish/US cross-country study", *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol 71, No. 102647.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2023.102647>
- Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Liu, B. and Chen, H. (2018) "Exploring continued knowledge sharing motivation in virtual communities of practice", in *Proceedings of the 15th International Conference on Intellectual Capital, Knowledge Management and Organisational Learning (ICICKM 2018)*, pp. 180–185.
- Liu, M.-S. and Liu, N.-C. (2008) "Sources of knowledge acquisition and patterns of knowledge-sharing behaviors: an empirical study of Taiwanese high-tech firms", *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol 28, No. 5, pp. 423–432. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2008.01.005>
- Mahmood, N. and Toker, A. (2022) "Impact of emotional intelligence on knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding behaviour", *Eurasian Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, Vol 2, No. 4, pp. 8–29.
<https://doi.org/10.23918/ejmss.v2i4p8>
- Malik, S. (2022) "Emotional intelligence and innovative work behaviour in knowledge-intensive organisations: how tacit knowledge sharing acts as a mediator", *VINE Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems*, Vol 52, No. 5, pp. 650–669. <https://doi.org/10.1108/VJKMS-09-2020-0158>
- Nonaka, I. and Konno, N. (1998) "The concept of "ba": building a foundation for knowledge creation", *California Management Review*, Vol 40, No. 3, pp. 40–54.
- Nonaka, I. and von Krogh, G. (2009) "Tacit knowledge and knowledge conversion: controversy and advancement in organisational knowledge creation theory", *Organization Science*, Vol 20, No. 3) pp. 635–652.
<https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0412>
- Pérez-Luño, A., Alegre, J. and Valle-Cabrera, R. (2019) "The role of tacit knowledge in connecting knowledge exchange and combination with innovation", *Technology Analysis and Strategic Management*, Vol 31, No. 2, pp. 186–198.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09537325.2018.1492712>
- Pohjola, I.A. (2015) "Community of practice as a tool for company performance in strategic context", *Journal of Innovation Management*, Vol 3, No. 1, pp. 122–138. https://doi.org/10.24840/2183-0606_003.001_0010
- Polanyi, M. (1966) "The logic of tacit inference", *Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy*, Vol 41, No. 155, pp. 1–18.
- PRISMA (2025) *PRISMA statement*. Available at: <https://www.prisma-statement.org/> (Accessed: 16 November 2025).
- Salehi, M. and Sadeq Alanbari, S.A. (2024) "Knowledge sharing barriers and knowledge sharing facilitators in innovation", *European Journal of Innovation Management*, Vol 27, No. 8, pp. 2701–2721. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-12-2022-0702>
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2023) *Research methods for business students*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Stokvik, H., Adriaenssen, D. and Johannessen, J. (2016) "Tacit knowledge, organisational learning and innovation in organisations", *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, Vol 14, No. 3, pp. 246–255.
[https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.14\(3-1\).2016.11](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.14(3-1).2016.11)
- Terhorst, A., Lusher, D., Bolton, D., Elsum, I. and Wang, P. (2018) "Tacit knowledge sharing in open innovation projects", *Project Management Journal*, Vol 49, No. 4, pp. 5–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/8756972818781628>
- Venkatraman, S. and Venkatraman, R. (2018) "Communities of practice approach for knowledge management systems", *Systems*, Vol 6, No. 4, pp. 36. <https://doi.org/10.3390/systems6040036>
- Wang, Z. (2025) "Linking innovative knowledge sharing and employees' innovative behaviour: the mediating role of thriving at work", *Knowledge Management Research and Practice*, Vol 23, No. 1, pp. 52–62.
- Wang, W. and Hou, Y. (2015) "Motivations of employees' knowledge sharing behaviors: a self-determination erspective", *Information and Organization*, Vol 25, No. 1, pp. 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2014.11.001>