
Exploring the Filipino's communicative behaviors in knowledge sharing

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The aim of this paper is two-fold: first is to explore the Filipino's communicative behaviors in knowledge sharing; and second, to refine an existing Western model using a local theoretical lens. Using Ipe's (2003) knowledge-sharing model as base concept and Jocano's (2001) discussion about Filipino Worldviews as research lens, an in-depth focus group discussion (FGD) of nine Filipino undergraduate Development Communication students were done to surface knowledge-sharing behaviors in classroom-oriented activities.

Findings revealed that although some factors were seen consistent with Ipe's model, several concepts surfaced in the study were found lacking in the model. These include issues related to accurateness of knowledge to share; the relationship between reciprocity and rewards; the role of empathy, relationship-preservation initiatives, dignity, and moral considerations in knowledge sharing; perceived status and power of individuals, groups, and institutions; and collective rewards. These factors were then connected to the Filipino worldview, and the study discussed how these concepts can expand the knowledge-sharing model conceptualized under a western perspective.

The paper concludes by inviting communication and knowledge - management researchers to continue engaging Western models with local theoretical lenses into fruitful dialogues to understand a social phenomenon more holistically, and by encouraging them to conduct more studies about the communicate factors affecting knowledge sharing.

Keywords: Knowledge management, knowledge sharing, Filipino psychology, Filipino communicative behavior, Eurocentrism, Orientalism

Introduction

Knowledge sharing activities are almost always emphasized and encouraged in this knowledge-driven society. Creating a system to facilitate knowledge-sharing activities is seen as an indicator of a healthy organization as



innovation and formation of competitive advantage through knowledge creation are always seen as a product of this activity (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Nonaka, 1991; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Many organizations, thus, see knowledge sharing as a very important endeavor every organization should aim (Lin, 2007; Lin, Lee, & Wang, 2009).

This fact attracted many researchers to study knowledge sharing in different perspectives; the most common of which is the identification of factors that (de)motivate people to share what they know. Since the act of sharing knowledge can be best understood on its own sociocultural context, there is a need then to understand people's behaviors in knowledge sharing in the context where it happens.

The constant call for local theorizing has led to the critical questioning of the explanatory power of the dominant Western social models in understanding local phenomena. Researchers who subscribe to this idea tend to look for a more "grounded" model and develop it as an alternative explanation of the phenomenon in lieu of the Western model.

This paper partly subscribes to this perspective by using the Filipino worldview to explore the communicative behavior of Filipinos in knowledge sharing. But instead of "fanning the flame" on the conflict between universalism and multiculturalism and/or Eurocentrism and Orientalism, which is deemed problematic (Wang & Kuo, 2010) and counterproductive (Zelizer, 2011), the aim is not to discredit existing model(s) but to refine it, specifically to look for cultural "similarity and equivalence and not... uniformity" (Wang & Kuo, 2010, p. 152).

This study shows that contextualizing the investigation of knowledge sharing using a more grounded lens can bring interesting findings to understand the communicative behaviors more holistically. This paper starts by discussing knowledge and knowledge sharing, then the research gaps, the guiding models, and the results and their implications.

Knowledge and Knowledge Sharing

In the field of knowledge management (KM), there is still a lack of consensus on what constitutes knowledge (Calhoun & Starbuck, 2003), and how to talk about knowledge (Kakabadse, Kakabadse, & Kouzmin, 2003). But despite these divergences, researchers agree on the most basic assumptions of knowledge: (1) knowledge is basically possessed by individuals, and (2) it is pragmatic or action-oriented (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). Following Turban's (1992 as cited in Jacobson, 2006) and Nonaka's (1995) definitions, knowledge, in this study, is generally defined as any valued information believed to be true by an individual possessing it, which can be used to achieve a goal.

In KM literatures, knowledge sharing is distinguished from knowledge transfer; the former focusing on human (or social) capital and the latter focusing on structural capital (Jacobson, 2006; Widén-Wulff & Ginman, 2004). In this paper, the researcher adopts Bartol and Srivastava's (2002) general definition of knowledge sharing: it is a conscious activity of two or more "individuals sharing organizationally relevant information, ideas, suggestions, and expertise with one another" (p. 65).

Knowledge sharing activity is more challenging as it may seem to be. Literatures suggest that effective knowledge sharing is influenced by the nature of knowledge to share (Nonaka, 1995); individual behaviors and motivations of knowledge sharers (de Vries, van den Hooff, & de Ridder, 2006; Lin, 2007); the nature of the relationship between and among knowledge sharers (Szulanski, 1996; Wang, Ashleigh, & Meyer, 2006); and the atmosphere where knowledge sharing will occur, such as culture and enabling systems and technologies (McDermott, 1999; Bartol & Srivastava, 2002; Hall & Goody, 2007).

Studies on knowledge sharing usually focus on determining the factors that drive and/or hinder knowledge sharing (e.g., Ardichvili, Page, & Wentling, 2003; Bock & Kim, 2002; Ryu, Ho, & Han, 2003) or designing and testing knowledge-sharing models (Choi, Kang, & Lee, 2008; Hendriks, 1999; Jacobson, 2006). Although there have been a lot of studies on knowledge sharing done in the past mostly in formal and Western organizations, Ipe (2003) claims that there is still a dearth in research regarding knowledge sharing at the individual level.

Knowledge Sharing: Asian Perspectives

Studies that investigate knowledge sharing in Asian settings provide a glimpse of typical Asian behavior in knowledge sharing. Hsiao, Ho, & Liu (2006), for example, focused on hidden agendas in knowledge sharing. Their discussions on the factors that demotivate people to share knowledge cover the issues on knowledge free-riders, knowledge liabilities, lack of absorptive capacity, and social segregation. Lin (2006), on the other hand, identified four factors that influence

individual behaviors in engaging in knowledge sharing activities: the feeling of compatibility of each member with each other; the feeling that each member is important in attaining the organization's goals; the feeling that the organization cares about them; and the perception that the working system is fair when it comes to knowledge sharing. Ryu, Ho, and Han (2003) found that the most important motivator to share is the belief of what the actors' significant others would say about the activity. Choi, Kang, and Lee (2008) found that interpersonal trust is seen as a more important motivator to share knowledge than providing technical support.

Assumingly, there is a dearth in research about KM in the Philippines. In fact, the Philippines was not included in the list of international KM literature sources in a study done by Serenko and Bontis in 2004. Had there been local KM research, most of them are in the context of economics and business; some are in the development sector (e.g., Flor, 2001; Talisayon & Suministrado, 2008). There is also a dearth in research directly focusing on the knowledge-sharing behaviors of Filipinos both in the organizational and the individual levels. Despite the advancements in Filipino psychology, there is paucity in studies that describe the communicative behaviors of Filipinos in knowledge sharing.

One of the best cases to study is knowledge sharing in classrooms. With the shift of teaching methods from the traditional to a more constructivist viewpoint, many local tertiary schools have adopted teaching methods that subscribe to socially mediated learning that encourage students to engage in interactive, group-based learning (Hammer & Giordano, 2012; Schunk, 2012).

Studies about knowledge sharing in classrooms usually focus on virtual learning communities where collaborative learning using computer technology is expected (e.g., Chen, Chen, & Kinshuk, 2009). Another stream of research follows the dominant paradigm where researchers try to find out the factors that motivate people to at least have an intention to share knowledge online (e.g., Buckley, 2012). Several similar studies had been done in the Asian context (e.g., Cadoc-Reyes, 2012; Chong, Teh, & Tan, 2014; Wongpipatwong, 2009). However, no study has been found within the range of accessible literature considered in this research that basically aims to understand knowledge sharing in Philippine classrooms, specifically in tertiary education. This gap is deemed crucial as Filipino communicative behavior in knowledge sharing has not yet been discussed and scrutinized in the context of the local educational system that has been claimed to be strongly oriented in the Western perspective (Ballestamon et al., 2000).

This paper then attempts to close these gaps by exploring the communicative behaviors of Filipinos in knowledge sharing by engaging a Western model and Filipino constructs into a conceptual dialogue. An implication of this paper is to offer some refinements to an existing Western model on knowledge sharing. The paper also hopes to contribute to the understanding of knowledge-sharing behavior in the Philippine context.

Guiding Model

Ipe's Model of Knowledge Sharing

Ipe developed a practical knowledge-sharing model from the meta-analysis of several studies on knowledge sharing done in the

West. The model identified four general factors that influence knowledge sharing.

The first factor that motivates people to share is the nature of knowledge to be shared. He further subdivided this into two factors: nature of knowledge based on tacitness or explicitness of knowledge following Nonaka's definition (1991; 1995), and the value attached on it. Ipe argued that since tacit knowledge is not easily codified, then explicit knowledge is more likely to be shared than tacit knowledge. The perceived value of knowledge, on the other hand, enables a person to screen what knowledge to be shared, when, and who to share it with. This factor also explains why knowledge sharing is difficult to see in a competitive environment as people put much value to knowledge, which could represent their "value" in the organization.

The next factor is the motivation to share. Ipe classified the two types of motivation: internal and external. Internal motivation includes the "perceived power attached to the knowledge and the reciprocity that result from sharing" (p. 345). This is similar to the value added to the knowledge discussed above, but it is more on perceiving knowledge to be shared to contain "power," which would define someone's potential "power" in the organization. If all members perceive knowledge to be "powerful," then knowledge hoarding is expected to happen. External motivation involves the feeling of "give-and-take" or mutual relationship of knowledge sharing. A person, for example, is more motivated to share if he expects certain knowledge with the same value in return. This includes the relationship with the recipient and the rewards for sharing. Trust is one of the main prerequisites in knowledge sharing. On

the other hand, power and status affect the directionality of sharing. Rewards have also something to do with knowledge sharing (e.g., Bartol & Srivastava, 2002).

Ipe also identified opportunities to share as influential in knowledge sharing. Formal opportunities include training programs and structured work themes; informal opportunities, on the other hand, include chats that open up knowledge sharing.

Ipe finally identified “culture” as the overarching concept where analysis of the former three factors should be based and contextualized. It is important because “it shapes assumptions about which knowledge is important, [and] it controls the relationships between the different levels of knowledge” (p. 350). Culture here refers to organizational culture.

Knowledge Sharing Behaviors as Described Using the Filipino Worldview

The Natural Dimension

Jocano (2001) said that Filipinos view the term *kalikasan* as the “sum total of all things in the environment” where life exists. Filipinos exert efforts to familiarize themselves in the place where they exist because they and the *kalikasan* (space where they exist) are not separate entities. Thus, what happens to the *kalikasan* also affects the individuals living in that “space.” This would explain why Filipinos are interested in the notion of “balance” in nature or *pagbabalanse*. This explains why Filipinos tend to seek to solve problems in order to maintain harmony.

Timbreza (1989) implied that Filipinos have a sense of “balancing the system” and reacting to that system to fix the imbalance if ever it is experienced. Thus, a person may sometimes feel an imbalance if his action to share knowledge with another person could not be reciprocated. Thus, to maintain this “balance,” that person may not engage in knowledge sharing if he sees that the sharing activity does not benefit him. *Pampalubag-loob* (propitiating) is also associated with this; if a favor is given, the receiver is expected to do something in return to conciliate.

The Normative Dimension

Asal, one of the three core values of Filipinos (Jocano, 2001), pertains to moral, ethical, emotional, and relational standards to which actions should depend. *Asal* includes *pagkamaramdamin* (emotionalism), *pakikipagkapuwa* (personalism), and *pagkakamag-anak* (familism). *Pagkakamag-anak*, however, is not always bounded to kinship relationships. Rather, *pagkakamag-anak* implies close relationships to other people as if they are members of the “family.” As Jocano discussed it, here is where the sense of collectivity is highlighted, for familism encourages each member to “promote small group interests over that of the larger community” (p. 91), which also suggests the value of their sense of “community.” In the context of knowledge sharing, a person, for example, may be motivated to share what he knows because he perceives that the action would benefit not only him but also the group where he belongs.

The Filipino sense of “community” may also be drawn from the Filipino’s concept

of *kapwa* (other). Enriquez (1978) said that *kapwa* is a core concept in Filipino social psychology as it enables social interaction within the community. *Kapwa* enables the formation of a sense of “community” (in communication perspective) as it recognizes shared identity, beliefs, and attitudes between and among people belonging in that “community.”

Pakikipagkapuwa, in a broader perspective, refers to providing and obtaining relationships that are highly personalized as part of the so-called concept of collectivity. In a more specific sense, however, it concerns how a person should relate to others. In fact, according to Jocano, a person is judged of his *asal* based on his ability to practice *pakikipagkapuwa*. In the context of knowledge sharing, a person, for example, may engage in knowledge sharing to someone whom he shares commonality. Trust is also related to *pakikipagkapuwa* since a relationship depends on the trust enjoyed by both parties.

The Ethical Dimension

Ethical dimension includes the concept of *hiya*, which drives a person to consider the feelings of other people in every decision or activity he takes. *Hiya* involves the concept of personal dignity, and dignity is related to personal feelings. A person is expected not to cause *kahihyan* to himself or to other people, for losing such means losing one's dignity.

This would explain why Filipinos are often regarded as accommodating. The positive aspect of *hiya* includes the concept of *pakikiramdam*, which involves the “feeling” of verbal or nonverbal cues before reacting to a certain phenomenon. Mataragnon (1987 as

cited in Timbreza, 1993) described this manifestation in Filipino psychology as “hesitation to react, inattention to subtle cues, and non-verbal behavior in mental role-playing” (p. 63). Timbreza further explained that *pakikiramdam* is used to clarify ambiguous concepts or situations by “feeling” in order to know how the person would react or respond to a particular situation. In other words, people tend to search for cues to know how to react in a specific activity. Thus, *pakikiramdam* is expected to be one of the norms Filipinos use when forging ties with other people and when sharing knowledge.

Another concept related to the above-mentioned concept is the tendency of a person to “please” other people, especially those who are perceived to have higher social status than him. Pleasing, however, may not be treated as a negative concept as Filipinos “please” in order to preserve social relationships (*pakikipagkapuwa*) or avoid problems (*pagbabalanse ng kalikasan*). Sometimes, however, people are forced to “please” other people, losing the essence of *pakikiramdam*.

Methodology

Research Design and Methods

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was done to determine the behaviors and motivations in knowledge sharing as well as the circumstances that lead each participant to share knowledge with others. This was done under the assumption that behaviors could be elicited from the narratives generated during discussions. An interview guide was prepared; the questions focused on the context of knowledge-sharing behaviors of college students. The knowledge to be shared was

limited to “knowledge” related to academics that are valued by the participants.

A Personal Information Sheet (PIS) was used to obtain personal data from the participants. This is also used to explore the general attitudes of the participants about knowledge sharing.

Sampling Procedure and Data Analysis

Nine participants were purposefully sampled, all coming from the College of Development Communication, UP Los Baños, to participate in the FGD. Five of them came from Luzon, one from Visayas, and three from Mindanao.

The discussions were transcribed, encoded, tagged, and analyzed using the software Xsight, a research software designed for qualitative analysis. Patterns and themes were noted based on Jocano’s (2001) worldviews, and conclusions were discussed using these patterns of behaviors. The themes surfaced were juxtaposed with Ipe’s (2003) model to explore possible areas to augment the model.

Results and Discussion

Nature of knowledge

Tacitness/Explicitness. For the participants, knowledge sharing in the school is almost always associated to explicit knowledge – the exchange of notes, books, and verbal discussions related to courses they are enrolled in. This, however, does not claim that tacit-knowledge sharing in schools does not happen. What is interesting though is that nobody attempted to categorize whether the knowledge

they share is tacit or explicit. The distinction might be deemed unimportant to them or *hindi mahalaga*.

Perceived value of knowledge. In the classroom setting, the knowledge is shared provided that the class or the whole group highly values that knowledge. That would lead them to share what they know so that all of them would benefit in the sharing activity. In competitive environments, a student may not share what he knows because of (1) security and privacy issues, and (2) matters that involve moral issues (“I will not share what I know during the exams!”). Sharing of valuable knowledge is mostly driven by *pakikipagkapuwa*, but interestingly, their *asal* restrains it when privacy and moral issues are involved in the sharing.

One finding that is seen lacking in Ipe’s model is the evaluation of the knowledge’s accurateness. The participants considered authenticity of knowledge to share by revealing a tendency to hesitate to engage in knowledge sharing if they are not sure of the “validity” or accurateness of their knowledge to be shared.

In the Philippine setting, assessing the genuineness of knowledge to share is not only done to make sure of its accuracy but also to preserve its value. Sometimes, the assessment is needed to save “face” or the reputation of the knowledge source, for divulging wrong knowledge is considered *nakakahiya* (shameful). Sharing “wrong” knowledge in class would result in humiliation, and this would make the source lose “face” in front of the teacher and his or her classmates. Consider this remark:

Participant: ... *halimbawa may isang question yung teacher. Alam mong tahimik*

lahat ng tao kasi alam mo na hindi kayo lahat sigurado kung tama ang sagot niyo so usually hindi na ako nagtataas ng kamay pag hindi ako sigurado (sa sagot). [...for example, the teacher threw a question. Everybody is silent because you know that everybody is not sure if his or her answers are correct; so usually, I do not raise my hand if I am not sure (of the answer)].

Quote 1

Here, the student assesses himself first if the knowledge he will share to the class is right or accurate. For him, assessing the accuracy of knowledge to share is needed to save his face from *kahihyan* as a result of hasty reciting. Thus, in the Philippine setting, authenticity does not only involve evaluating the quality of knowledge to share per se but is also used as a way to preserve dignity.

Motivations to share

Knowledge as power.. In a competitive classroom environment, knowledge is withheld to the “other” group because knowledge is perceived to have a possibility to be used against the other and, thus, help to get better grades. This supports Pfeffer’s (1980 as cited in Ipe, 2003) findings that “withholding knowledge from those considered competitors is often regarded as being useful to attaining one’s goals” (p. 346). However, even without competition, knowledge is withheld if the source perceives that the sharing will make his privacy and security vulnerable.

Reciprocity. The participants associate reciprocity with the benefits derived from sharing. Like what Schulz (2001) expressed,

people engage in knowledge sharing if the activity is regarded as meaningful, and it becomes meaningful because of the benefits they can acquire after sharing. During the interview, two participants expressed this view, but one of them gave an interesting note.

Participant: *Magsi-share po ako... pag may makukuha ka din po (sa kanya)... kasi po sa amin pong mga freshman usually po pag patong-patong na po yung requirements namin, pag nagmamadali na, sasabihin na lang nung isa kong kaklase, “hoy ano papakopyahin na lang kita tapos ako din pakopyahin mo.” Parang nagpapalitan na lang po kami kasi pag hindi mo i-shinare parang parehas na din kayong wala. Kaya mabuti pang ibibigay mo kung ano yung alam mo at may makukuha ka din sa kanya para matapos ang gawain niyo. [I will also share knowledge if the other person shares his also... because as freshmen who usually have a lot of requirements to do, one will say “I will let you copy my answer then let me copy yours also.” We just exchange materials because both of us will suffer if we don't do that. So it is better to share what I know so that I can get something from the other person to accomplish the task.]*

Quote 2

Two interesting points arise from the results. First, reciprocity involves an expectation that the act should be reciprocated, as if it is a rule. The phrase “I will let you copy my answer then let me copy yours also” implies that the sharer and the receiver has a “close” relationship since the knowledge source was able to enforce a “rule” on copying. Second, reciprocity depends on the context, for it sometimes makes the knowledge players feel

obliged to share and reciprocate because of the situation. Time matters since urgency to produce an output drives the students to collaborate and share. Being somewhat obliged to share, however, is outweighed by the perceived benefits that both knowledge players can acquire. In a way, *pakikipagkapuwa* is involved in abiding to the “copying rule,” but this time, such is motivated by *pagbabalanse* to avoid problems, both in her relationship with the sharer and the output that they have to produce (e.g., grades).

Trust. Trust, at least in this study, is associated with other factors like the degree of acquaintance of the source to the receiver and the closeness or the quality of relationship the source shares with the [potential] receiver. As seen earlier, knowledge is not usually shared with strangers but is almost always shared with closed friends. This trust, however, may sometimes be “overused,” especially to closed friends, for in some instances, a source is forced to share in order to preserve the relationship.

Although trust as a factor of knowledge sharing has been discussed in literature, this study found that empathy is working side by side with trust. Empathy is an important characteristic of a collectivist culture. Consider this remark:

Participant: *Sa isang klase halimbawa, (gumagawa kami ng) newsletter, (nakikita kong) hindi niya talaga malaman kung ano ba yung nasa unahan o nasa next page o nasa susunod na pages. Ako alam ko naman pero kung hindi naman siya nagtatanong hindi ako magsi-share unless makita ko naman na kailangan niya ang tulong ko. Ganon talaga kasi hindi ko siya ka-close eh.*

[In one class, for example, (we are doing) a newsletter, (I noticed that) she does not really know what is on the next page or in the succeeding pages. I know the answer, but I will not share what I know if she does not ask help from me, unless I see that she really needs my help. It’s just that, because we’re not close.]

Quote 3

Two points can be derived from this quote. First, the knowledge source feels some “empathy” to the other party, for he is aware that the other person (1) does not know what he is doing and that (2) he needs help; and this awareness leads him to consider the possibility of sharing what he knows. He implies that he understands the feeling of “having no idea on what to do” and that this feeling leads him to consider sharing. However, the empathy per se would not drive a person to engage in knowledge sharing because the knowledge source expects that the effort to ask for help should come from the other party and that although the source may feel some empathy, he would not share knowledge unless the action is initiated by the one who needs his help. Second, the degree of empathy and the immediacy of action to share depend on the quality of relationship the knowledge source and the receiver enjoys, as reflected in the last sentence.

Another concept related to trust but lacking in Ipe’s model is the role of relationship preservation. The participants identified a way to preserve a relationship while maintaining their personal standard of *asal*. Consider the next remark as regards allowing the other party to copy from the source’s assignment:

Participant: ... kung hindi ka man magsi-share (ng eksaktong sagot), imo-modify mo yung alam mo. Hindi mo siya isi-share totally para kahit papano, hindi ka nagsishare o parang hindi ka nagmadamot. Basta parang hindi [mo] ibibigay lahat ng alam mo. [If ever you will not share (the exact answer), you will just modify what you know. You will not totally share it so that it will not appear that you are selfish. You don't give all the things you know.]

Quote 4

The possibility of “modifying” the answer is seen as an alternative to help the receiver by engaging in a “moral” knowledge-sharing activity. “Modifying” is used here to mean “paraphrasing” and/or giving a gist but not altering the contents of the knowledge to make it inaccurate or wrong. In short, the concept of a “moral” way of sharing knowledge constitutes paraphrasing the knowledge (or giving some gist or idea) to share and not copying or using the knowledge verbatim. This is consistent to *asal* or what a person perceives as a good act, and it is also a form of *pakikipagkapuwa* as the person still shares what he knows to a comrade so as not to appear “selfish.”

Another alternative aside from paraphrasing is to share general concepts related to the knowledge asked and to let the receiver figure out, conclude, and/or learn it by himself, instead of giving the exact answer. Consider the following remark:

Participant: *Hindi ko siya minomodify. ... [ang] ginagawa ko, nagbibigay ako ng guide. “Ganito yun, sa pag-analyze ganito*

yung gagamitin mong theory, gagamitin mong system”, ganyan-ganyan kaya bahala ka nang mag-analyze. At least bibigyan ko siya ng route or path para makagawa ng sariling analysis. [I do not modify the answer. ...what I do is I give a guide. “This is how you do it, if you analyze this, you use this theory, or use this system, etcetera”, so s/he should figure out how to analyze it. At least I gave him a route or path for him to do his own analysis.]

Quote 5

The participant perceived that the sharing is more beneficial to both sides if he “teaches the man to fish, rather than giving him a fish” so to speak. This act is also perceived good in accordance to *asal* and *paninindigan* since the source is able to share knowledge and help the receiver acquire it and, at the same time, sticks to his morality of not just letting the other person copy his notes verbatim.

The idea of *pakikipagkapuwa* is also seen as related to the tendency of pleasing the receiver to preserve the relationship. One participant said that he is “forced” to share knowledge with his classmates who are sensitive or *matampuhin* in order to preserve relationships and maintain *pakikipagkapuwa* to counter *pagkamaramdamin*. It is noted that these instances are, thus, highly related to the concept of *pakikiramdam*, for it is a tool used by Filipinos to show *pakikipagkapuwa* and practice and maintain *kabutihang-asal*.

Status and power of knowledge sharer. Two interesting findings were seen here that seem implicit in Ipe's model. The status and power of knowledge sharers include (1) their own perceived status and power as an individual;

and (2) the perceived status and power of a group, organization, institution, or field where they are affiliated.

A person who perceives himself to have less power and lower status tend not to share knowledge at all; or at least, they are very cautious when to share, what to share, whom to share, and how to share. This was found out in Huber's (1982 as cited in Ipe, 2003) study although the findings focused on directionality of sharing (who to share it with) rather than deciding who, what, where, when, and how to share given their perceived status. Although not explicitly discussed, the participants' self-perception about their status in the knowledge-sharing activity affects their decision as to whether or not they will share in a particular situation. One participant said that sometimes she does not share knowledge because people might perceive her as *nagmamayabang* (being arrogant).

More interesting, however, is other peoples' perception of power and status of a larger group or field to which the knowledge source is affiliated. Most sources are motivated to share knowledge because they perceive that people attach values and stereotypes to the group, organization, or field to which they belong to, and these stereotypes lead other people to set some expectations about them. For example:

Participant: *Pag nagkikita kami ng mga dating classmates ko, yung knowledge sharing nagiging payabangan (minsan.) Kasi we're from different colleges and universities, eh ako as UP² student sa barkada namin, [nakakaramdam] ako na kailangang mas marami akong ma-share na knowledge kasi from UP ako. Naaapektuhan ang identity*

mo... Kasi nag-iexpect sila na mas marami ka dapat ma-share na knowledge... compared sa kanila. [When we (former classmates) see each other, (sometimes) knowledge sharing becomes a contest. We're from different colleges and universities, and as a UP student in the group, (I feel) that I should share more knowledge because I am from UP. My identity is affected; they expect that I should share more knowledge compared to them.]

Quote 6

This participant is motivated to share knowledge because of the expectations that other people have not on her per se but on UP, the university where she studies. In turn, she is pressured to share to meet that expectation. In the Filipino context, the person and the group where one is affiliated with are not treated independently, for a person is usually judged based on the group where he belongs. This participant, thus, feels that she will be "judged" according to the stereotypes people associate to UP. Sometimes, this leads her to feel forced to share knowledge.

The perceived status and power of a sharer within a group either serves as a hindrance or motivation to share. Consider this remark:

Participant: *Isa po sa nag-ihinder sa akin, halimbawa sa klase ko sa STAT 164, lima lang kami sa klase: dalawang (estudyante na kumukuha ng) Biology, dalawang nagma-masteral ng VetMed so ako lang po yung DevCom. So pag nag-uusap po sila, parang I wanted to participate sa discussion pero... baka mali (ang masabi ko) kasi mas marami silang alam (sa topic na iyon). [One thing that hinders me is, for example in our*

STAT 164 class, we are just five in the class: two (students are taking up) Biology, and two students are taking up their master's degree in VetMed, so I am the only undergraduate DevCom student. If they discuss about a topic, I want to participate in the discussion but... (The things that I might say) may be wrong because they have more knowledge (about that topic) than me.]

Quote 7

The participant feels that knowledge sharing would not be worthy in this situation because he perceives himself to have a lower status than the receivers of knowledge. He then connected this act to *kahihyan*, in which he chose not to talk rather than lose his *halaga*

Another interesting finding is that reciprocity (or getting the exact depth and quality of knowledge in return) is not expected if the source perceives that he has more knowledge than the receiver. In this case, the only reciprocal action expected of the receiver is affirmation or appreciation of the effort of the source to share, which is treated somewhat like a reward and a propitiating act. This has something to do with the concept of *pagbabalanse*.

Furthermore, if the source perceives that he and the potential receiver have the same "level" of knowledge, knowledge sharing is perceived as horizontal as both learn through collaboration. Here, both could be the source and the receiver.

Searching for cues also has something to do with the status of the knowledge sharer. *Pakikiramdam* or having a "feel" of other's verbal and/or nonverbal cues first before proceeding

to the next action is evident in the Filipinos' communicative behavior. The cues affecting their decision to share or not include the following instances: (1) they perceive that the receiver really needs the knowledge; (2) they perceive that the receiver is willing to be assisted by the source; (3) they perceive that the source can understand the knowledge to be shared; and (4) in previous sharing activities, the receiver showed appreciation to the efforts of the source to share knowledge. The participants claim that they do these for *pakikisama*, which explains why these factors depend on the quality of relationship the source and the receiver mutually enjoy.

Rewards. Although "reward" in KM literature usually pertains to individual rewards, most of the participants in this study also expressed "group rewards." Consider this:

Participant: *For example, sa topic namin sa (DEVC) 131... hindi dumating yung iba so yung topics nila na kailangang i-submit for that broadcast plan wala. So kailangan kong i-share yung topics na alam ko and kumbaga I will research na rin for them... para din kasi sa grade namin. Kasi pag hindi makompleto yung topics for that broadcast plan, wala din kaming grade... [For example, in our topic for (DEVC) 131... some of our group mates did not attend the meeting, so the topics that they might have suggested for the broadcast plan will not be submitted. So I have to share other topics I know; it's like I would just do the research for them for the sake of us getting good grades. In case the suggested topics are not complete for the broadcast plan, all of us will not earn any grade.]*

Quote 8

Notice that the participant is somewhat pressured to share his knowledge for the sake of his group. The reward for sharing does not only benefit his but also the group where he is a member. Again, the concept of Filipino collectivism is evident.

Sharing, however, sometimes becomes a sort of punishment. In the above quote, for example, doing something for the group, either sharing or researching, becomes a burden to the participant because he is able to sacrifice his abilities and intellect “for the group.” Although this is clearly not a positive motivation to share, the overall output of the group serves as the “reward” for sharing, whatever efforts are used or wasted in order to achieve that “end.”

Opportunities to share

Opportunities to share are evident in classroom settings. Informal opportunities include sharing knowledge before the teacher enters the class and starts the discussion. These opportunities are likewise witnessed in photocopying stalls where explicit knowledge is reproduced and in other generic shared spaces such as building lobbies, washrooms, computer/ coffee shops, and *tambayan*. Formal opportunities, on the other hand, include study groups or review sessions usually organized before exams. Here, everybody is expected to share knowledge since such an opportunity is formally done in a predetermined place and time.

Conclusions and Implications

Table 1 shows the summary of findings of this study when Ipe’s knowledge-sharing model is juxtaposed with Filipino worldviews. Although the table does not show some Filipino

communicative behaviors in knowledge sharing that support the factors originally identified in Ipe’s model, it pointed out some concepts that were not explicitly discussed in the model, leading to the possible refinement of such a Western model when deemed to be applied in the local context.

For example, the original model did not consider the direct relationship of rewards and reciprocity in a sense that reciprocal knowledge sharing per se can be a form of emotional reward for both the knowledge sharer and the receiver. Ethical issues in knowledge sharing were not discussed in detail in the model resulting in an implicit “downplaying” of this factor in the overall knowledge-sharing process; however, this study argues otherwise, for the participants assessed how they should share what they know as guided by their *asal*. Knowledge sharing was also motivated by the perceived status and power of the group or organization where the sharer belongs to, a factor that was not explicitly discussed in Ipe’s model. Finally, dignity is always at stake in all knowledge-sharing activities, a concept that was also lacking in the original model.

This may call for a possible revisiting of the model to incorporate other factors that can also affect knowledge sharing.

Future studies may be done to identify other communicative behaviors found to be (in)consistent with Ipe’s model. One may also explore conducting FGDs to other sectors of society to see whether the knowledge-sharing behaviors differ from one sector to another. Another is to find a way to empirically test Ipe’s model, and learn other lessons from there.

Table 1. Summary of the findings of this study

Factor		Lacking in Ipe's model	Explanation using Jocano's Filipino Worldview
Nature of knowledge			
Tacit/ Explicit		The students did not distinguish whether what they are sharing is tacit or explicit.	The distinction might be deemed unimportant, and might thus be outside the discourses of <i>halaga</i>
Value of knowledge		Instead of only "security and privacy issues" as factors that would demotivate students to share knowledge in competitive environments, issues on morality and ethics also come into play	The value of <i>asal</i> restrains them in sharing knowledge to others
		Knowledge to share should be consciously evaluated before sharing it to others	Accurateness of knowledge to be shared is needed to save face driven by the personal value of <i>hiya</i> (or <i>kahihayan</i>).
Motivation to share			
I N T E R N A L	Knowledge as power	(most are seen consistent with Ipe's model)	
	Reciprocity	Rewards can also be obtained in reciprocal knowledge sharing	Reciprocity is driven by <i>pakikipagkapuwa</i> only if the two parties share close social relationship
		In some cases, knowledge sharing has become an "involuntary" act, but can be outweighed by the perceived reward after doing so	<i>Pakikipagkapuwa</i> sometimes makes the sharer feel "obliged" to share, but reward in doing so can be weightier, as a result of the value of <i>pagbabalanse</i>
E X T E R N A L	Trust	Empathy and relationships preservation are connected with trust	Sharing is done to avoid <i>tampo</i> , which is a result of the sharer's inability to show <i>pakikipagkapuwa</i>
		Moral considerations in sharing knowledge are evident	What to share, who to share it with, and how to share it are also driven by <i>kabutihang asal</i> and <i>paninindigan</i>
	Status and power of knowledge sharer	The status and power of knowledge sharers include (1) their own perceived status and power as an individual; and (2) the perceived status and power of a group, organization, institution, or field that they are affiliated with	This is part of the arguments of Filipinos (or Asians) having a "collectivist culture"; somewhat driven by the value of <i>hiya</i> because <i>kahihayan</i> or dignity is always at stake in knowledge sharing activities; also <i>pagkakamag-anak</i> and <i>kapuwa</i> in case of item number 2
		One does not expect getting exact depth and quality of knowledge shared in return if the source perceives that s/he has more knowledge than the receiver	This expectation is somewhat driven by <i>pagbabalanse</i>
		In "imbalanced" sharing, the source only expects affirmation or appreciation from the receiver	Appreciation is expected as feedback as a form of <i>pampalubag-loob</i>
		The cues that affect decision to share or not includes: (1) the perceived necessity of knowledge; (2) the perceived willingness of the receiver to "listen"; (3) perceived ability of the receiver to understand the knowledge; and (4) appreciation and efforts given by the receiver	Cues from sharers who are not "close" with each other are based from <i>pakikiramdam</i> , and sharing in this context is done under the virtue of <i>pakikisama</i>
Rewards	Group rewards are more evident	This is driven by collectivist Filipino culture	
Opportunities to share	(most are seen consistent with Ipe's model)		

Many development initiatives use ICTs in knowledge sharing, for most internationally funded development projects now include the creation and maintenance of communities connected online. This paper invites communication scholars doing studies in KM to consider refocusing their research from usual knowledge communication topics, such as the nature and use of ICTs in knowledge sharing, to the nature of knowledge sharing *per se*.

This study demonstrates how a Western model and a local perspective can be fruitfully engaged in a theoretical dialogue to bring interesting insights to understand the world holistically. It is hoped that this study can open new venues and possibilities in conducting local studies on knowledge sharing that can contribute more to the understanding of human behaviors toward KM initiatives in the context of communication.

Endnotes

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