

# **Explore the challenges of knowledge sharing in operating open innovation projects over the past ten years: A Systematic Review and Gap Analysis**

**Yudie Zhong, Yifei Sheng, Zenan Xu**  
*The University of Manchester, The United Kingdom*

## **Abstract**

Enterprises need to focus on the collaborative research and development of partners to acquire external knowledge as knowledge sharing is crucial to open innovation. Open innovation emphasizes intensive collaboration with external partners to acquire novel ideas and knowledge, catalyzing the evolution of products and services as an emerging innovation paradigm. However, doubts about open innovation have also emerged when researchers conduct in-depth research on open innovation. Organizations need to establish robust mechanisms to facilitate the flow of knowledge across organizational boundaries. Additionally, enterprises must learn how to work with diverse stakeholders regarding different goals, cultures, and ways of working. Despite these challenges, companies that can effectively manage and leverage external knowledge can significantly improve the innovation performance, enhancing competitiveness. Organizations can confirm that valuable insights and expertise are shared and utilized more efficiently, leading to enhanced innovation, improved decision-making within the organization and the competitive edge in the market. This research focuses on the challenges of knowledge sharing in managing open innovation projects. Firstly, it introduces the context of knowledge sharing within the realm of open innovation. Secondly, this research examines the existing literature to identify the research directions in knowledge sharing and open innovation and gives research gaps. Furthermore, this research conducts a systematic literature review and evaluating knowledge sharing through the lens of social exchange theory. The findings identify and summarize the specific challenges and practices of knowledge sharing in operating open innovation projects. Finally, it emphasizes the significant role of knowledge management practices in promoting open innovation and outlines future directions.

**Keywords:** Knowledge Management; Knowledge Sharing; Open Innovation; Social exchange theory, Systematic Review