

The Nexus Between Supervisor Knowledge Hiding and Subordinate Innovative Work Behaviour: A Dual Mediation Model

Kolawole Shola Ojo, Omagbitse Barrow

HSE University, Saint Petersburg Russia

Abstract

Knowledge hiding behaviour is harmful to employee innovation. Even though previous research shows that the consequences are more destructive where the behaviour occurs between supervisors and their subordinates (vertical) than it is between coworkers (horizontal), yet the scanty existing evidence on the former presents opportunities for further investigation. This study explores how supervisor knowledge hiding influences subordinate innovative work behaviour and two mechanisms in the relationship. We surveyed 512 employees in 13 different industries in Nigeria and we modelled the mediating effects of workers' relationship and subordinate knowledge hiding using structural equation modelling. The results revealed that an increase in KH of the supervisor is associated with reduced worker relations, which, in turn, reduces IWB. Also, we report that subordinates learn the KH behaviour of their supervisor, and they do so to the detriment of their own innovative behaviour. Therefore, this study recommends that management should gate prospective applicants with knowledge hiding tendencies. Also, it should discourage the behaviour by including KH metric as part of the performance evaluation system for employees in supervisory roles. The study uncovers two new mechanisms – subordinate knowledge hiding and workers relations by which supervisor knowledge hiding influences subordinate innovative behaviour.

Keywords: Knowledge Hiding, Innovative Work Behaviour, Worker relations, Nigeria