

# Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology



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# A Model of Knowledge-sharing for the 21st Century Organizations

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# ARTICLE INFO

Article history: Received 13 April 2022 Accepted 15 September 2022

Keywords:
Organizational psychology
Organizational innovation
Social innovation
Knowledge sharing
Innovation management
Systematic review

Palabras clave:
Psicología de las organizaciones
Innovación organizacional
Innovación social
Intercambio de conocimientos
Gestión de la innovación
Revisión sistemática

# ABSTRACT

Organizations' survival ability is increasingly constrained by their innovation possibilities, that is, by their capacity to create and share knowledge in order to cope with new and more complex challenges. Aiming for the three axes on which new organizational models must be based (economic, technological, and social innovation), this article carries out a systematic review among five databases on the variables related to innovation in organizations. After applying exclusion criteria, 132 papers out of the 1,215 originally found were analyzed. As a result, an integrating theoretical model was proposed from the organizational psychology perspective: the model of knowledge-sharing organizations. The model allows for cultural, psychosocial, and technological aspects and proposes three levels of analysis: 1) innovative culture and governance (that groups together the characteristics of a culture oriented towards innovation, and the organizational policies into which it is translated); 2) leadership, teams, and people (that includes variables that impact people's innovative capacity, leadership styles, and forms of teamwork); and 3) technological tools for innovation (that focus on how technology can be used, specifically ICT, to enhance the organization's innovative capacity). Future directions as well as limitations are addressed at the end of the article.

# Un modelo de conocimiento compartido para las organizaciones del siglo XXI

# RESUMEN

La capacidad de supervivencia de las organizaciones está cada vez más condicionada por sus posibilidades de innovación, es decir, por su capacidad de crear y compartir conocimiento para hacer frente a nuevos y más complejos retos. Atendiendo a los tres ejes en los que deben basarse los nuevos modelos organizativos (innovación económica, tecnológica y social), el artículo realiza una revisión sistemática en cinco bases de datos sobre las variables relacionadas con la innovación en las organizaciones. Tras aplicar criterios de exclusión, se analizaron 132 trabajos de los 1,215 encontrados inicialmente. Como resultado, se propuso un modelo teórico integrador desde la perspectiva de la psicología organizacional: el modelo de organizaciones creadoras de conocimiento compartido. El modelo contempla aspectos culturales, psicosociales y tecnológicos, y propone tres niveles de análisis: 1) cultura innovadora y gobernanza (que agrupa las características de una cultura orientada a la innovación y las políticas organizativas en las que se traduce); 2) liderazgo, equipos y personas (que incluye las variables que inciden en la capacidad innovadora de las personas, los estilos de liderazgo y las formas de trabajo en equipo); 3) herramientas tecnológicas para la innovación (que se centra en cómo se puede utilizar la tecnología, concretamente las TIC, para potenciar la capacidad innovadora de la organización). Finalmente, se abordan las limitaciones del estudio y se proponen futuras líneas de investigación.

The serious situation that results from COVID-19 in today's society has led to information society 4.0., where we find ourselves stepping on the accelerator towards a 5.0 society in which the person lies at the centre of the technological transformations that must be implemented. In 2015 the Japanese government proposed society 5.0., characterized by being a super-intelligent society in which needs are clearly differentiated and satisfied, and in such a way that required products and services are supplied in the necessary quantities to the people who demand them when and

as they need them (Harayama, 2017). Regardless of their age, sex, region or language, all this allows people making up this society to receive high quality services that derive from combining different systems (e.g. energy, transport), which are supported by advanced organizational management systems. This means that three types of changes must be managed: economic and geopolitical change; technological change; and a change in people's mentality. Therefore, the organizations making up this type of society must prepare to manage these changes by assuming new organizational

Cite this article as: Ayestarán, S., Gómez, D., Martínez-Moreno, E., Lira, E. M., & Da Costa, S. (2022). A model of knowledge-sharing for the 21st century organizations. *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 38(3), 175-187. https://doi.org/10.5093/jwop2022a21

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models that allow their innovation and the development of these super-intelligent societies.

The OECD's Oslo Manual (OECD/Eurostat, 2018) groups all innovation types into two categories: product (substantial improvements in goods or services) and business (improvements in business processes for different functions, including business innovations). This way of understanding innovation, which is closely linked with organizations' technological and economic performance, contrasts with its eminently social nature because it is a phenomenon that always results from interactions between people (European Commission, 1995; Pol & Ville, 2009).

Pot and Vaas (2008) distinguished among technological, economic, and social innovation in organizations. Several research works have highlighted the enormous potential of taking into account the social side of innovation (both its means and ends) to complement its technological side and to, thus, respond in parallel to social challenges and needs (Pot, 2011; Pot et al., 2012; Pot & Vaas 2008). Social innovation has been defined as "the introduction and implementation of new ideas, activities, services, and processes in order to satisfy social needs of individuals, groups, and organizations within society, and to advance in social relations and social organization" (Looise, 1996 in Bondarouk & Olivas-Luján, 2014, p.11).

Scientific literature has investigated, from a variety of disciplines, the processes that lead organisations to generate greater innovation, with knowledge management (KM) being one of the most widely studied and cited as a sustaining pillar for organisations, especially in knowledge-intensive organisations (Widén-Wulff & Suomi, 2003). Within KM, knowledge sharing (KS), the ability to share knowledge within the organisation, has emerged as a core aspect (Hislop, 2013; Widén-Wulff & Suomi, 2003).

In general, KS is understood as a form of behaviour or process that occurs at the individual level, although it may be conditioned by individual, group, or contextual/organisational variables (Ahmad, 2018; Hussein et al., 2016; Razak et al., 2016; Zheng, 2017). Some of the commonly recognised factors that can influence KS are individual traits, such as experience, beliefs, or values (Wasko & Faraj, 2005), organisational or environmental traits, such as the organisational climate (Saleh & Wang, 1993) or a reward system (Farooq, 2018), and the technologies made available to the process together with the use that is made of them (Hall-Andersen & Broberg, 2014; Lin, 2007).

However, Widén-Wulff and Suomi (2003) shifted the focus from an individual to a systemic understanding of KS by proposing a knowledge-sharing organisation (KSO) model. Farooq (2018) follows in the same line by considering KS as a process that takes place between organisational units rather than in terms of individual behaviours.

Ayestarán (2017) integrated several research findings (Ilgen et al., 2005; Pot & Vas, 2008; Witherspoon et al., 2013) into a knowledge-sharing organization model, grounded in the a number of assumptions. First, a culture based on transparency and trust will lead to the practice of knowledge sharing and, hence, to a better innovation performance. Second, teams and organizations are required to develop shared mental models and transactive memory systems among their members. Third, creativity and cooperation are the key competencies for knowledge sharing and innovation in teams. Fourth, shared digital platforms for information and knowledge sharing will leverage innovation capabilities.

This paper aims to follow the path initiated by these authors (Ayestarán, 2017; Widén-Wulff & Suomi, 2003) by proposing an organisational model for managing KS based on the model proposed by Ayestarán (2017).

This article focuses on carrying out a systematic review on the three axes on which new organizational models must be based: economic innovation, technological innovation, and social innovation. For this purpose, a thorough examination of existing scientific evidence on the variables related to innovation in organizations was carried out. Later an alternative and integrating theoretical model was proposed, a new model for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that takes cultural, psychosocial, and technological aspects as its central elements: the model of Knowledge-Sharing Organizations.

#### Method

The methodology herein employed to review the scientific literature is the narrative review, which enables studies from different methodologies and theoretical perspectives to be related (Siddaway et al., 2019).

To perform this analysis, articles published from 2015 to 2020 in ABI-INFORM, JSTOR, Dialnet, ProQuest, and Scopus were considered. The selected keywords to search were based on innovation types: technological innovation, technical innovation, social innovation, work innovation, organizational innovation, and economical innovation. These keywords appeared in keywords and abstract fields. In the searches for the terms technical innovation and technological innovation, the term organizati\* was added as a filter to any part of the text so that only the articles that at some point refer to some organizational element would emerge.

# **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

Having performed the search for all the previous terms in the selected journals, only the articles that met the following criteria were incorporated in the analysis: articles written in English and/ or Spanish whose central theme was innovation in organizational contexts, and which examined the variables that intervened in the innovation process. Quantitative and mixed studies were accepted, as were both empirical and quantitative meta-analyses. However, studies that were exclusively qualitative, case studies, and narrative reviews that did not include statistical analyses were excluded.

Some studies were eliminated from the analyses because, despite meeting the above criteria, they presented serious problems in generalizing their results to innovation types other than that studied by taking a perspective that was limited to a certain activity sector.

# **Articles Included**

Searches yielded 1,215 articles, which were analyzed from the five aforementioned databases. During the analyses, 1,083 articles were excluded because they neither met the inclusion criteria nor appeared in more than one search. This left 132 papers that met the inclusion criteria. Table 1 shows the number of articles analyzed per database. Table 2 includes the source, study and method type, as well as investigated innovation type indicated in the analysed articles.

# **Results**

The results of the narrative analysis have been organised taking into account the levels of analysis proposed by the scientific literature on KM and KS. Many authors organise the variables surrounding KS into three levels (organisation, team or group, and individual; Ahmad & Karim, 2019; Zheng, 2017). Hussein et al. (2016) differ by identifying technological applications, in addition to employee motivation (individual level), and the organisational context (organisational level), as key to KS. However, the perspectives that view KS as an organisational process rather than as individual behaviour speak of dimensions or elements without organising them into levels. For example, Widén-Wulff and Suomi (2003) cite intellectual capital, building shared knowledge in business processes, communication as a key individual skill, a good ICT infrastructure and sufficient financial

Table 1. Number of Articles Analyzed per Database

Database	Keywords	Field	Original articles number	Final articles number
	Technological Innovation	keywords	203	23
	Technical Innovation	keywords	10	0
ProQuest	Social Innovation	keywords	204	12
	Organizational Innovation	keywords	89	30
	Economic Innovation	keywords	0	0
	Technological Innovation	descriptors	106	4
	Technical Innovation	descriptors	5	0
Dialnet	Social Innovation	descriptors	56	2
	Organizational Innovation	descriptors	74	9
	Economic Innovation	descriptors	1	0
	Technological Innovation	keywords, abstract, title	214	42
	Technical Innovation	keywords, abstract, title	5	0
Scopus	Social Innovation	keywords, abstract, title	4	0
	Organizational Innovation	keywords, abstract, title	28	15
	Economic Innovation	keywords, abstract, title	0	0
	Technological Innovation	abstract	7	1
	Technical Innovation	abstract	0	0
JSTOR	Social Innovation	abstract	7	1
	Organizational Innovation	abstract	1	0
	Economic Innovation	abstract	0	0
ABI/INFORM	Technological Innovation	abstract	79	13
	Technical Innovation	abstract	8	0
	Social Innovation	abstract	82	0
	Organizational Innovation	abstract	90	0
	Economic Innovation	abstract	2	0
Total			1,275	1321

Note. ¹Duplicate items removed.

headroom as the main elements. Meanwhile, Farooq (2018) posited KS as a multidimensional construct consisting of organisational culture, organisational structure, reward systems, motivation, interpersonal trust, management support, and ICTs.

Taking the latter perspective as a starting point, we have set out the results of the analysis below, organised into key dimensions for innovation management and KS in organisations. Subsequently, in the conclusions we shall group the identified dimensions into three levels for an integrating understanding of KS management.

# **Organizational Culture and Innovation**

From a cultural perspective, an entrepreneurship culture and oriented in the long term is considered beneficial for innovative performance compared to an organization's paternalistic and internal-oriented cultures (Laforet, 2016). Shahzad et al. (2017) found that an organization's innovative performance is supported by a culture and climates that are characterized by flexibility and support for change. It has also been established that workers' resistance to change and control and perception of risks negatively impact attitudes to adopt new technologies and work processes (Escobar-Rodríguez & Bartual-Sopena, 2015). García-Sánchez et al. (2018) also found that an organization's internal flexibility benefits its performance through more innovation.

Based on the Competing Values Framework (CVF) by Cameron and Quinn (1999), Rezaei et al. (2018) found that adhocratic and clan cultures had a positive effect on both organizational learning and technological and administrative innovation. Conversely, hierarchical or market cultures act as barriers for innovation in organizations. However, Makvandi and Nejad (2018) reported that market orientation benefits an organization's innovative capacity and performance. Finally, the existence of a culture oriented towards learning and knowledge management has been related to greater innovative capacity (Abdi et al., 2018).

Other authors have focused on investigating which capabilities of organizations can contribute to their innovative performance. They found that an organization's learning capacity and creativity (Sutanto, 2017), learning oriented towards exploration and exploitation (D. Wang & Lam, 2019), organizational agility (Vaculik et al., 2019), business intelligence, and the ability to share knowledge (Eidizadeh et al., 2017) are all organizational capabilities or qualities that facilitate or benefit innovation.

Intellectual capital stands out as one of these organizational attributes for allowing innovation to improve. J. Li and Yu (2018) found that intellectual capital has a direct positive effect on technological innovation and an indirect effect on business model innovation through certain organizational characteristics. Y. Wang et al. (2019) observed how the efficiency of intellectual capital positively impacts an organization's technological capacity. However, Xu et al. (2019) stated that intellectual capital (human, structural, relational) subdimensions have different effects on an organization's performance and its technological innovation capacity, while the human capital and structural subdimensions positively impact organizational performance, but relational capital has a negative impact. Relational capital positively influences technological innovation, while human capital has a negative impact. In more generic terms, Manzaneque et al. (2017) confirmed that human, and structural and relational capitals are capable of improving a company's performance in technological innovation. Jiang et al. (2019) demonstrated the positive impact of human capital on organizational innovation.

Finally, much effort has been made to investigate the benefits of absorptive capacity for organizations. This concept was first proposed by Cohen and Levinthal (1990) as an organization's ability to recognize the value of new and external information, assimilate it and apply it for commercial purposes. Since then, many researchers have related this ability to innovative performance in both the technological and organizational fields (Del Carpio Gallegos &

**Table 2.** Findings from the Reviewed Sources

Reference	Source	Investigated innovation type	Study type	Method
Abdi et al., 2018)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Al-Busaidi and Olfman, 2017)	International	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Antonioli and Della Torre, 2016)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Anzola-Román et al., 2018)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Azar and Ciabuschi, 2017)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Bandera and Thomas, 2019)	North America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Bartoloni and Baussola, 2016)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Baussola and Bartoloni, 2016)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Begonja et al., 2016)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Beuren et al., 2019)	South America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Blank and Naveh, 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Bocquet et al., 2019)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Calisir et al., 2016)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Calza et al., 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
(Campanella et al., 2017)	International	Business and product	Empirical	Mixed
Casini et al., 2018)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Černe et al., 2015)	International	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
(Chaubey and Sahoo, 2019a)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Chaubey and Sahoo, 2019b)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Chaubey et al., 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Qian Chen and Liu, 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
(Quan Chen et al., 2020)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
(Choi et al., 2019)	North America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Cleven et al., 2016)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Corsi et al., 2019)	Europe	Business  Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Cozzarin, 2017) Cui et al., 2016)	North America International	Business and product Business and product	Empirical Empirical	Quantitative Quantitative
(Damanpour et al., 2018)	North America	Business and product	Empirical	_
Dan et al., 2018)	North America	Product	Empirical	Quantitative
Del Carpio Gallegos and Torner, 2018)	South America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative Quantitative
(Delgado and Martín, 2006)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Dietrich et al., 2016)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Divisekera and Nguyen, 2018)	Oceania	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Eidizadeh et al., 2017)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Escobar-Rodríguez and Bartual-Sopena, 2015)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Fernández Perea, 2019)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Fierro Moreno and Martínez, 2015)	North America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Fu et al., 2015)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Fuentes and Soto, 2015)	South America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
García Álvarez-Coque et al., 2017)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
García-Pozo et al., 2018)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
García-Sánchez et al., 2018)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Geldes, Felzensztein, et al., 2017)	South America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Geldes, Heredia, et al., 2017)	South America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
González-Blanco et al., 2019)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Griffith et al., 2017)	North America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Guisado-González et al., 2017)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Guo et al., 2019)	Asia	Product	Empirical	Quantitative
Hartono and Kusumawardhani, 2018)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
He et al., 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Heinze and Heinze, 2018)	North America	Business	Empirical	Mixed
Heredia Perez et al., 2019)	South America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Hervas-Oliver and Sempere-Ripoll, 2015)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Hervas-Oliver et al., 2016)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Hervas-Oliver et al., 2018)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Ho and Fu, 2018)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Hsu et al., 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Huang et al., 2019)	Asia	Product	Empirical	Quantitative
Jiang et al., 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Juneja and Amar, 2018)	International	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
(Kauffmann and Carmi, 2019)	International	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Kharuddin et al., 2015)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative

**Table 2.** Findings from the Reviewed Sources (continued)

Reference	Source	Investigated innovation type	Study type	Method
Kim and Shim, 2016)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Kittikunchotiwut, 2015)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Kwon and Cho, 2016)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Kyriakou and Loukis, 2019)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Laforet, 2016)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
C. Li and Ghirardi, 2019)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
. Li and Yu, 2018)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Linder and Torp, 2017)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Liu et al., 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Lopez-Valeiras et al., 2016)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Loukis, Arvanitis et al., 2017)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Loukis, Kiriakou, et al., 2017)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Ma, Gu, and Liu, 2017)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Ma, Gu, Liu, et al., 2017)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Makvandi and Nejad, 2018)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Maldonado et al., 2019)	International	Business and product	Meta-analysis	Quantitative
Manzaneque et al., 2017)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Martin-Rios and Ciobanu, 2019)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Martin-Rios et al., 2019)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Marulanda-Grisales & Montoya-Restrepo, 2015)	South America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Maslach, 2016)	North America	Product	Empirical	Quantitative
Mehra, 2018)	North America	Business	Empirical	Mixed
Mehra and Coleman, 2016)	North America	Business	Empirical	Mixed
Mendi and Mudida, 2018)	Africa	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Min et al., 2016)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Mokhber et al., 2018)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Mosey et al., 2017)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Mothe et al., 2015a)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Mothe et al., 2015b)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2018)	South America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Parahoo and Al-Nakeeb, 2001)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Phillips et al., 2019)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Mixed
Phornlaphatrachakorn, 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Prasad and Martens, 2015)	North America	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Radicic and Pinto, 2019)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Rasheed et al., 2017)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Rasool et al., 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Resende Junior and Fujihara, 2018)	South America	Business	Empirical	Mixed
Rezaei et al., 2018a)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Rezaei et al., 2018b)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Santamaria Ramos and Madariaga Orozco, 2019)	South America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Shafique et al., 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Shahzad et al., 2017)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Shier and Handy, 2014)	North America	Business	Empirical	Mixed
Shier et al., 2019)	North America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Shin et al., 2018)	North America	Product	Empirical	Quantitative
Simao and Franco, 2018)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Soltani et al., 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Sutanto, 2017)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Fortoriello et al., 2015)	International	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Torugsa and O'Donohue, 2019)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Jnceta et al., 2016)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Jnceta et al., 2017)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Jrban and Gaffurini, 2017)	Africa	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
/aculik et al., 2019)	Europe	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Waleed, 2015)	Africa	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
D. Wang and Lam, 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Xia et al., 2018)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Xu et al., 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
r. Wang et al., 2015)	North America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
Y. Wang et al., 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
Y. M. Wang and Wang, 2016)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative

**Table 2.** Findings from the Reviewed Sources (continued)

Reference	Source	Investigated innovation type	Study type	Method
(Yan et al., 2021)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Yoo et al., 2018)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Zhang et al., 2017)	North America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(F. Zhou and Gu, 2019)	Asia	Business and product	Empirical	Quantitative
(J. Zhou et al., 2017)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Y. Zhou et al., 2019)	Asia	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Zollet and Back, 2015)	Europe	Business	Empirical	Quantitative
(Zuñiga-Collazos, 2018)	South America	Business	Empirical	Quantitative

Torner, 2018; García-Sánchez et al., 2018; Kittikunchotiwut, 2015; Maldonado et al., 2019; Min et al., 2016).

# Promoting Innovation from Governance: Innovative Organizational Policies

Apart from being studied as a process, the incorporation of external knowledge into an organization can be seen as strategic commitment or a decision made by management, which makes it is a question of governance. The management team benefits the organization either directly by searching for external knowledge (Prasad & Martens, 2015) or indirectly by promoting collective orientation towards learning in the organization (Qian Chen & Liu, 2019).

Much research work has attempted to establish what kind of governance styles or what decisions that depend on top management can foster innovation in organizations. Innovation in governance is, in fact, the mechanism that allows an organization to fully benefit from technological innovations to improve its financial performance (Černe et al., 2015). Fierro Moreno and Martínez (2015) found that certain strategy-dependent innovation dimensions (or strategic innovation) serve to explain good performance in organizationaltype innovations. Specifically, integrating process innovation and innovation management into an organizational strategy positively impacts the organizational innovations related to leadership, organizational commitment, and culture. It has also been proven that quality-oriented governance directly affects technological, organizational, and management innovation (F. Zhou & Gu, 2019), and the possession of internationally recognized standardization certificates leads to higher productivity (Calza et al., 2019).

Marulanda-Grisales and Montoya-Restrepo (2015) studied the impact of knowledge management to find that it benefits technological innovation. Reciprocally, the factors related to technological innovation (i.e., perceived benefits or complexity), and to organizational (i.e., culture or support from management) and competitive pressure are beneficial influences for implementing knowledge management systems into companies (Wang & Wang, 2016). Finally, the role of interactive management control systems has been investigated, which involves face-to-face discussion with superiors, subordinates, and colleagues about the data generated by the system, and accelerates organizational and process innovation (Lopez-Valeiras et al., 2016).

Other authors have delved into the impact of organizational policies on organizations by studying the role of the practices and measures promoted from the human resources or people management. Reward systems areas, mostly through extra remuneration, found widespread support in the literature as precedents for innovative and organizational performance (Chaubey & Sahoo, 2019b; Rasool et al., 2019; J. Zhou et al., 2017). However, other authors have pointed out that placing emphasis on this type of extrinsic rewards to promote innovation can have counterproductive effects on the organizational cultures that are not conservative (Choi et al., 2019). There are also reports about the dispersion of remuneration in an organization according to the position occupied by someone, which maintains an

inverted U relation with participation in the organization and, in turn, contributes to greater innovation (T. Wang et al., 2015).

It has been pointed out that organizational participation can serve as a precedent for further innovation (T. Wang et al., 2015). In line with this, some research works have delved into the operation of this variable and related it to the implementation of High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) (Rasheed et al., 2017). More specifically, implementing such systems has a positive impact on innovative performance when associated with participation mechanisms according to the organization's intellectual capital level. Thus in organizations with low intellectual capital, HPWS enhance innovation when combined with more direct participation mechanisms. For organizations with high intellectual capital, implementing participatory governance is more beneficial (Y. Zhou et al., 2019).

Promotion and professional development opportunities are another measure that contributes to improve people's innovative performance (Rasool et al., 2019; J. Zhou et al., 2017). Likewise, making efforts in the development of those people who already occupy management positions, through more autonomy (Linder & Torp, 2017) or the acquisition of ambidextrous capacity (Choi et al., 2019), also benefits organizational outcomes in innovation. Investing in training activities for people in an organization is perhaps the variable that obtains the most empirical support as a valid measure to promote innovation (Chaubey & Sahoo, 2019b; Cui et al., 2016; Fernández Perea, 2019; Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2018).

Finally, there are other policies that also benefit innovative performance, such as investing resources in research and development (Dan et al., 2018), or the nature of the work to be carried out (J. Zhou et al., 2017). It has also been established that incorporating talent by hiring personnel positively impacts innovative capacity (Manzaneque et al., 2017; Rasool et al., 2019).

A final aspect that has gained relevance in recent years is the relation between sustainability and innovation. It has been proven that the environmental awareness of a company's CEO (Huang et al., 2019) or reducing the organization's environmental impact (García-Pozo et al., 2018) positively influences innovative performance as both increase the chances of an organization performing more R&D activities. In the same way, corporate social responsibility (CSR) can be used to promote ethnic diversity in an organization, and this variable has been related to better technological innovation outcomes (Bocquet et al., 2019).

By way of conclusion, lots of measures can be adopted by the senior management or departments responsible for managing organizations' human talent, and these measures and policies are closely intertwined with the organizational culture. Resende Junior and Fujihara (2018) stated that factors like R&D management or an innovation-oriented strategy are combined with an innovation-oriented culture and leadership.

# **Leadership and Work Teams**

The behaviour of leaders of teams, departments, or organizations evidently impacts their subordinates' performance. In fact, the

leader's innovative behaviour alone can improve an organization's innovative outcome (Waleed, 2015). By promoting interactions between employees so they ask for advice, how individuals perceive culture can improve and can be better adopted (Heinze & Heinze, 2018). Leadership oriented to people's development can act as a mediator between adopting transactive memory systems, which allow knowledge sharing in an organization and the innovative performance of the latter (Kwon & Cho, 2016).

Transformational leadership has received solid empirical support as a promoter of organizational innovation (Ho & Fu, 2018), and this relation is moderated by people's ability to take risks and to experiment (Mokhber et al., 2018). A positive relation has been detected between this type of leadership and employee creativity, as mediated by intrinsic motivation and self-perception of creativity (Chaubey & Sahoo, 2019a; Chaubey et al., 2019). Other leadership styles have been investigated, such as ethical leadership, which also serves as a predictor of individual and organizational innovation (Shafique et al., 2019). Finally, fostering ambidextrous capacities in leaders from middle management, that is, exercising ambidextrous leadership, has positive effects for business innovation (Choi et al., 2019).

To conclude, the current organizational environment requires leaders who not only function as bosses who control and manage, but also catalyze change to maintain and improve organizations' innovative performance (Phornlaphatrachakorn, 2019).

Organizations' current trend to flattening in their organizational structure and to use work teams as work basic units is an indisputable fact. The literature has shown that specialization of roles in project teams in general, and the existence of an executive and active role in particular, help to mitigate uncertainty, which improves performance in an innovation project (Kim & Shim, 2016). In the teams field, the need for good learning behaviour has been proven (i.e., the processes of seeking and providing feedback, sharing information, and preparing relevant information for the task), and exploration activities and exploitation are complementary and produce better results (Blank & Naveh, 2019).

When working in virtual teams, temporary virtual teams have been found to better perform in well-documented and methodical tasks, but lack of a relationship between members in complex tasks takes its toll on team productivity. Compared to temporary teams, permanent virtual ones better perform complex tasks that require a higher level of relationship between members (Kauffmann & Carmi, 2019).

# **Individual Behaviour**

A broad research field has studied the connections between individual innovation-oriented behaviour and specific variables to the organizational environment, such as leadership style, organizational culture and, of course, the organization's innovative performance. Thus employees' innovative behaviour has been empirically supported as mediators of the relation between HPWS and an organization's innovative performance (Fu et al., 2015). Research has also been conducted on how people can foster innovation by playing different roles. For example, those individuals who support, facilitate, and stimulate innovation in their colleagues adopt a role called a "catalyst", which allows research staff to obtain better results (Tortoriello et al., 2015).

Psychologically belonging to the organization and the empowerment of working people both have a positive effect on innovative individual behaviour. Furthermore, empowerment is a moderator for the relation between climate and organizational innovation (Liu et al., 2019).

The organizational environment can differently impact individuals through stressors of several natures. In line with this, a

positive relation exists between challenging stressors (development opportunity, pressure from a supervisor, or having to meet a deadline for a task) and innovative behaviour sustained over time. Yet other stressors can act as obstacles (lack of clarity in responsibilities or conflicts with colleagues), which weighs down this type of behaviour. Self-perception of creativity acts as a mediator in these relations, while the organization's innovative climate moderates the relation between self-perception of creativity and sustained innovative behaviour (He et al., 2019).

Finally, some research works have highlighted the positive effect on new companies of the entrepreneur's passion to improve innovative performance and organizational performance (Ma, Gu, & Liu, 2017; Ma, Gu, Liu, et al., 2017).

# **Technology as Support for Innovation**

Implementing and employing information and communication technologies (ICT) in an organization are closely related to either its innovative performance or the organizational-type innovations that occur (Divisekera & Nguyen, 2018; Quan Chen et al., 2020). Investing in ICT acquisition and hiring specialized personnel in its use positively impact ICT adoption in organizations (Loukis, Arvanitis, et al., 2017). In the corporate website context, the complexity and intensity of information, perceived benefits and management's support favour the greater diffusion of innovation in this means (Zollet & Back, 2015).

Of all the different technologies that can be placed at the service of organizational innovation thanks to information processing, adopting ERP (enterprise resource planning) stands out for being associated with better organizational performance. This relation is also mediated by the usability of both the system and user satisfaction (Kharuddin et al., 2015).

In the interorganizational collaboration context, cloud computing has been identified as a means to not only reduce costs, but to also increase organizations' capacities and flexibility (Loukis, Kyriakou, et al., 2017). The adoption of such technology by an organization is favoured by an ICT cost reduction strategy, the adoption of an innovation-oriented strategy, and management's support of an organization's ICT structure (Kyriakou & Loukis, 2019).

# Organizations in the Environment: Cooperation with Other Entities and Open Innovation

A closely related field of study to absorptive capacity has emerged that investigates how to improve innovative results through cooperation or collaboration with other organizations, which has led to the term open innovation. Lichtenthaler and Lichtenthaler (2009) stated that absorption capacity is only one of the knowledge capacities available for open innovation that an organization must develop, together with transformative, connecting, and inventive capacity. Shin et al. (2018) linked these capacities with performance in companies' technological innovation.

Many authors have shown that organizations from different sectors and typologies (public institutions, start-ups, etc.) can benefit from interactions and collaborations. For instance, collaboration with citizens, universities, government organizations, industries in general, high-tech companies, and other organizations that are similar to them, professional associations or suppliers (Bandera & Thomas, 2019; Divisekera & Nguyen, 2018; Fuentes & Soto, 2015; Geldes, Heredia, et al., 2017; C. Li & Ghirardi, 2019; Parahoo & Al -Nakeeb, 2001; Radicic & Pinto, 2019). Despite the clear empirical support for its benefits, this process is not exempt of difficulties. For instance, the difficulty of social organizations to integrate and implement the knowledge generated by collaboration with other organizations into their processes has been verified (Phillips et al., 2019).

In the same direction, abundant research demonstrates the benefits of technological and non-technological innovation to incorporate external knowledge into organizations because it complements internal research activities (Anzola-Román et al., 2018; Fernández Perea, 2019; Hartono & Kusumawardhani, 2018; Simao & Franco, 2018). However, it has also been established that oversearching for external knowledge can negatively affect innovative performance (Hartono & Kusumawardhani, 2018). Similarly, exploration activities to incorporate new knowledge have been shown to be complementary to exploitation activities performed to improve innovative performance (Guisado-González et al., 2017; Torugsa & O'Donohue, 2019).

Al-Busaidi and Olfman (2017) found that factors related to knowledge workers and the support received from colleagues largely determine these workers' intention to share knowledge through interorganizational systems designed for this purpose. They suggested that fostering a knowledge-oriented culture, a structure designed for this purpose and technological skills, can indirectly facilitate these knowledge exchange flows between workers from different organizations.

## Conclusion

### **Proposal: The Model of Knowledge-Sharing Organizations**

Based on the analyzed articles, this paper proposes the model of Knowledge-Sharing Organizations as an opportunity to address organizational transformation from three levels that allow holistic intervention in an organization's innovative capacity.

# Level 1 - Innovative Culture and Governance

The examined results are consistent in stating that cultures which promote more innovation are flexible, proactive, change-oriented, and long-term. Orientation to the market or abroad must be combined with caring for the internal dimension, which can be achieved through participation mechanisms. Finally, the organization must develop the capacity to absorb or incorporate knowledge from outside, and must share it so it can be distributed inside the organization. Incorporating intellectual capital is key in this regard.

Organizations can develop a series of strategies that allow them to develop this type of culture and capabilities. Implementing quality and knowledge management systems has positive effects on innovative capacity. Likewise, investing in research activities or orientation towards sustainability are also characteristics of innovative organizations.

Attention being paid to the organization's internal dimension is clearly translated in terms of people management policies. Indeed, incentives and rewards can be used to promote the workforce's innovative behaviour. However, as employing extrinsic motivators can be counterproductive, it is necessary to accompany them with opportunities that generate intrinsic motivation towards motivation. Training people, as well as the existence of professional development and progress opportunities, move in this last direction.

# Level 2 - Leadership, Teams and People

In line with the conclusions drawn so far, leadership oriented towards the development of people, which is ambidextrous (i.e., it encourages both exploration and exploitation activities), transformational, and ethical, is adequate for promoting innovation in subordinates.

In work teams, learning behaviour is a variable that is clearly supported as the predecessor of innovative performance. The specialization and structuring of team roles can be used to improve team performance. However, no study has dealt with these elements to explain their operation in detail along with other aspects like the social processes that occur in teams.

At the individual level, psychological belonging to an organization and empowerment are variables that facilitate innovation-oriented behaviour. Nevertheless, this individual performance is also influenced by organizational variables like the amount and type of stressors present in the environment.

# Level 3 - Technological Tools for Innovation

Although many technology types are placed at the service of innovation, this work focuses on the role of ICT as facilitators to create and distribute knowledge within and between organizations. Thus the drawn conclusions are not exclusively applicable to organizations in technology sectors. Apart from certain specific practices like employing ERP software, it has been found that investing in ICT and hiring specialized personnel in their use contribute to more innovation in organizations. In addition, the usability of the implemented tools and staff's satisfaction with them mediate the positive effects of ICT on organizational performance.

# **Discussion and Some Future Directions**

This paper proposes an explanatory model of innovation in the organizational context from the organizational psychology perspective and continues the work of Ayestarán (2017) by focusing on the variables that intervene in the psychological, social, and cultural spaces that exist in all organizations merely because they are made up of people. The three differentiated levels in the model intend to collect all the elements that determine organizations' innovative in the culture field, governance and people's interactions with one another, with their leaders or subordinates, and also with the surrounding environment. A technological level is added to take into account the psychological and social aspects that come into play when employing technologies designed to transmit and generate information.

## **Future Directions**

It is firstly necessary to determine a series of cultural variables that can be operationalized and measured. For example, orientation to, or support for, change has proven effective in promoting innovation in organizations. This support for change can translate into organizations' greater flexibility, participation, and horizontality instead of a rigid consolidated hierarchy. An organization can also focus on developing innovations by taking into account both its internal (organization of work, leadership, etc.) and external (relationships with agents in the environment, communication abroad, etc.) dimensions. The cited variables (support for change, flexibility, participation, horizontality, and external and internal orientation) are completed with a final organizational culture characteristic that guarantees the conversion of declared values into practiced values: transparency.

Secondly, it is necessary to find an explanatory model for the psychosocial level that connects the cultural elements of our model with people's individual performance. As this connection cannot occur in a space other than work teams, future research should focus on this environment as an enabler of organizational change.

Thirdly, using technology to create and distribute knowledge is, and will be, the most subject level to evolution in this model as a result of the unstoppable development of new ICT. In fact there are currently two major issues in the area that need addressing: using big data and applying artificial intelligence. Big data provide a large and varied number of very accurate data at breathtaking speed.

Recent studies (e.g., Ghasemaghaei & Calic, 2019, 2020) have found that the most important feature of big data to increase performance innovation is not the large amounts of data, but the speed at which data are acquired. Other studies (e.g., Ghasemaghaei & Turel, 2020) have shown that employing big data can lower the quality of company decisions.

Given the large amounts of data that big data offer and the possible problems that their management can lead to, artificial intelligence has emerged as an indispensable resource for modern organizations. The artificial intelligence in charge of handling and managing the overwhelming data volumes that stem from employing big data allows increased operational performance (Dubey et al., 2020). To this end, artificial intelligence utilizes many techniques. of which the most widely used ones are ANNs (used for information processing that allows patterns or models to be found), FL/modelling (it provides qualitative information that can be used by people to make inferences or decisions), ABS and MAS (model-based agents that autonomously simulate actions and interactions, and are capable of solving problems), or Gas (algorithm-based search technique for problem solving ) (Toorajipour et al., 2020). Employing big data and artificial intelligence opens up a range of possibilities for today's organizations, albeit one not exempted of risks. Analyzing how these elements are incorporated into the organizations that create shared knowledge is of vital importance to achieve not only technological and economical, but also social, innovation types.

Bearing in mind the COVID-19 situation, management teams have begun to very quickly exercise e-leadership. E-leadership has been defined as "a social influence process embedded in both proximal and distal contexts mediated AITs [advanced information technologies] that produce a change in attitudes, feelings, thinking, behavior, and performance" (Avolio et al., 2014, p 107). The Six E-Competency (SEC) Model (Van Wart et al., 2017) contemplates the following competencies that an e-leadership must possess: e-communication skills (the leader's ability to manage workload, lack of communication, and clarity in virtual communication); e-social skills (a leader's ability to offer their employees support); e-change management skills (understood as the ability to provide techniques that allow to adapt to using technologies); e-tech savvy (based on being aware about new ICT on the market, and combining them with more traditional methods and technological security); e-team building skills (ability to motivate teams, recognize the achievements and work done, and apply team accountability); e-trustworthiness (creating a climate of trust in the leader, work-life balance and diversity management). Future research should examine how all the competencies required of leaders in the organizations that create shared knowledge behave for both organizations' performance and innovation.

Finally, cooperation between organizations for innovative purposes (called open innovation) will be an interesting way to develop this model in the future. Cooperation among organizations, institutions or collectives has been a constant throughout the history of humanity. However, in the globalized hyperconnected world that we live in today, alliances have become an imperative for organizations that wish to survive in a tremendously competitive environment.

# Limitations

With all this, the present work also intends to generate a model that can help organizations of all kinds to improve their innovative performance by applying the conclusions set out. However, this work has a series of limitations that must be taken into account, some of which actually open up new research lines to be addressed in the future. The main limitation lies in the followed methodology. Although a narrative review is adequate for carrying out a general exploration of a wide knowledge area, which was actually the case, lack of a statistical meta-analysis of the selected articles

limited the reliability of the obtained conclusions because it was not possible to statistically compare the results of the included articles. This limitation was mitigated by establishing an inclusion criterion for the analysis: the found articles followed a quantitative methodology to, thus, guarantee the validity of each individually reviewed article.

Although many research works that have worked on culture and governance levels were found, not many studies have dealt with the psychosocial (except some research lines about leadership) and technological levels. This might be due to how the search terms were formulated, and also to the employed database types. In any case, this work confirms that the literature lacks work about an explanatory model of innovation that takes into account the establishment of cultural, psychosocial, and technological elements in organizations, despite the obvious links that connect these study levels with organizational reality.

# **Conflict of Interest**

The authors of this article declare no conflict of interest.

## Acknowledgement

This article was written by Sabino Ayestarán in collaboration with the authors. Unfortunately, Sabino passed away before seeing the final result. We acknowledge Sabino Ayestarán Etxeberria (1936-2020), professor of social psychology, expert in group psychology, and great mentor of future generations, for his extensive contribution to the field and for always being ahead of his time.

"Economic and technological factors are important for the survival of organizations, but they are not enough to foster the innovation that makes them competitive in the market.... To innovate you have to build shared and interdisciplinary knowledge." (S. Ayestarán).

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