Chapter 10
Customer Experiential Knowledge's Contribution to Innovation Management:
Toward the Definition of a New Organizational Competence

Dhouha Jaziri
Sousse University, Tunisia

ABSTRACT

Many researchers have explored the knowledge management theory. However, to the author's knowledge few were interested in the tacit knowledge construct, whether it is gained inside or outside the organization. This chapter has a challenge to analyze in-depth the embedded knowledge gained from the customer, especially as it sheds light on the role of customer experiential knowledge by defining the customer experiential knowledge. It follows an emphasis on the customer experience and its close relationships with innovation management. Hence, a thorough theoretical background is presented progressively in order to define a new organizational competence labeled CEKMC. The first part presents an overview of the knowledge status, fundamental knowledge views, the evolutionary theory to the tacit knowledge construct. The second part stresses the definition of customer tacit knowledge related to customer experience. Finally, the conclusion defines a new organizational competence relative to this knowledge while discussing its contribution, especially to the experiential innovation type.

INTRODUCTION

As researches which are interested in the tacit knowledge are scarce, it is of paramount importance to revisit the tacit knowledge. This will be done as follows: a theoretical analysis will be presented through an extensive literature review, concerning the knowledge management in general as well as the tacit knowledge in particular. The first part treats the knowledge status and the related fundamental knowledge views as mainly *the Resource Based view* (RBV) and its extension *the Knowledge based view*. This first

section concludes by regarding the evolutionary theory of knowledge creation of Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), while clarifying the tacit/explicit types of knowledge. The second part will be devoted to the construct of tacit knowledge (TK), while highlighting the importance of the customer tacit knowledge related to customer experience. In this case, the objective is to present the tacit knowledge related definitions and roots, by defining especially the customer experiential knowledge (Jaziri-Bouagina, 2017). The third and last section underlines the relationship of tacit knowledge with the innovation management. In this case, it is the objective to ascertain that tacit knowledge is a key input of innovation. In particular, to show that the customer experiential knowledge nourishes the innovation. On this issue, the proposed chapter concludes by the proposal of a new organizational competence relative to the customer experiential knowledge, while discussing its contribution to the experiential innovation in the case of well-being tourism.

BACKGROUND

The Knowledge Underpinnings

Knowledge Status

A knowledge research synthesis, established by Shin *et al.* (2001), presents a conceptualization of "Knowledge" according to three views on the status of knowledge made from information (Shin, Holden, & Schmidt, 2001).

The first view considers knowledge as an object that is stored and manipulated. In this case, MacQueen (1998) considers the Knowledge as the pathway to information (p.609) and as a set of rules (p.610). Respectively, McQueen (1998) supports that *The Knowledge can be retrieved through access to documents and databases containing data and information...* (p. 610), and that *the set of rules is extracted by a knowledge engineer, example are diagnostic procedures, from a domain expert who has extensive experience* (p. 610). Once information is ascertained to be useful in a context, it becomes Knowledge and this it is deposited (Shin *et al.*, 2001).The second view defines knowledge as a process related to the application. Regarding this second view, McQueen (1998) states that *Knowledge can be stored in repositories of electronic communication* (p.610). He discusses this view in the context of consulting firms. The repository is an archive of comments and opinions of experts useful for other less expert consultants.

As reported by Shin *et al.* (2001), the implication of considering Knowledge as "process" for Knowledge management is that organization focuses on the conception of the process of Knowledge creation and dissemination. Also, considering *Knowledge as process* requires a system/technology in order to connect the source and recipient of knowledge (Shin, Holden, & Schmidt, 2001, p. 339).

The third view conceptualizes Knowledge as belief *in mind*, personalized information or the cognitive status of knowing (Shin, Holden, & Schmidt, 2001). According to Von Krogh (1998):

The individual justifies the truthfulness of his or her beliefs from observations of the world, which depend on the individual's unique viewpoint, sense-making processes and individual experience (Von krogh, 1998 in Sara, 2008).

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