

Chapter 12

Team Creativity by Integrating Knowledge Management: A Guide for Andragogical Leadership

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge management (KM) closely relates to team creativity and is a critical strategy for businesses to maintain competitiveness. The synergy between KM and team creativity benefits and empower andragogical leadership by increasing team engagement, which results in organizational success. Prior studies examined the KM models, processes, systems, and components that influence team creativity. However, the integration of KM into facilitating team creativity is yet to be fully understood. Therefore, this study provides a rationale for the relationships between KM and team creativity. Based on this interplay, the authors create a novel framework that serves as a practice guideline that aggregates KM models and team creativity components. The framework aims to assist andragogical leadership in effectively and purposefully managing teams while considering the major challenges of practice. The study goes beyond the boundaries to theoretically connect KM and team creativity, which benefits both academic research and the application of KM in business.

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INTRODUCTION

Andragogical leadership is a significant research area in education and in business (Jeanes, 2021; Wang & Torrisi-Steele, 2022). Andragogy refers to the art and science of assisting adults in their learning (Knowles et al., 1998). Andragogical leadership requires a growth mindset to learn and solve problems actively. Andragogical leaders believe that employees can handle problems and achieve self-realization (Jeanes, 2021).

In today's competitive context, where technology and knowledge are changing rapidly every day, organizations must be innovative, creative, and capable of making changes (Wang & Torrisi-Steele, 2022). To empower andragogical leaders in this context, knowledge management (KM) is the starting point to turning the company and the employees into learning organizations and individuals, which is the primary goal of andragogical leaders. KM entails the creation, storage, transmission, and use of knowledge in organizations (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). More practically, KM manages knowledge generation and use, including identifying knowledge, managing it, and designing strategies to harness knowledge successfully in any company (Vaio et al., 2021; Crane, 2016).

Regarding andragogical leadership, KM procedures, and practices may help stakeholders to be more forward-looking and more actively engaged in innovation. In practice, KM has also been emphasized through its implementation of three creative activities to maximize or exploit knowledge (Kazanjian & Drazin, 2012): product line extensions, new platform development, and new business creation. Product line extensions are widely observed in software and hardware companies. For example, IBM, Apple, Dell, and others started to sell the first generation of hardware products (laptops), then gradually expanded their product line based on the accumulated knowledge and user feedback. This process heavily relies on knowledge sharing among team members. When businesses target a new industry or technological area, they create a new product platform to serve as the framework for product line extensions by leveraging related advantages of economical scope and resource sharing. New business creation is when a firm embarks on an entirely new and unrelated market with existing or new technology.

Overall, leveraging and utilizing knowledge in the business process and applying it directly to new applications has distinct advantages for improving efficiency (Ode & Ayavoo, 2020). In fact, it is impossible to keep organizational competitiveness that depends on unsystematic knowledge accumulation or completely relies on the human brain. However, if KM applies to the whole organization, it is challenging to meet different department requirements. Hence, KM could be conducted and used in teams to improve creativity and efficiency by developing a standard protocol (Rong & Liu, 2021; Johnson, 2016).

On the same line of research, a comprehensive framework for leadership is provided by Price (2004), cited by Callahan and Grunberg (2018). In this framework, leadership functions at four levels: personal, interpersonal, team, and organizational. According to the principles of this framework, managing a team and understanding the team's dynamics is a core competence for leadership, as one individual is not equipped with all the knowledge and experience needed to solve the issues (Wang & Torrisi-Steele, 2022). As a result, the attention to teams has increased in psychology and management (Tang & Schmidt, 2021; Kratzer & Mrozewski, 2021). Research reveals that team creativity is a collection of fresh and practical ideas developed at the team level (Dong et al., 2017). Team creativity is essential for andragogical leadership to consider, as it facilitates value contribution and the competence to solve uncertain problems (Peng et al., 2019). Moreover, the success of an enterprise is fundamentally dependent on team creativity (Kratzer & Mroewski, 2021). Undoubtedly, significant moves can be made by seeing

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