

## Building Trust and Enhancing Knowledge Sharing: Exploring Human Resource Knowledge Management in Hubei's Art Design Industry

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### Article History:

**Received:** 28-10-2024

**Revised:** 05-11-2024

**Accepted:** 13-12-2024

### Abstract:

This study explores the relationship between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM), organisational trust, and employee knowledge sharing within the art design associations of Hubei, China. As the art design sector becomes increasingly globalised and competitive, effective management of knowledge resources is crucial for driving innovation and improving organisational performance. The aim of this research is to provide an in-depth understanding of how HRKM practices shape employee knowledge sharing behaviours, with a focus on the mediating role of organisational trust. Using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and data gathered from employees across various art design associations in Hubei, the study offers empirical evidence on the critical relationships among these variables. The findings reveal that successful HRKM practices are key to fostering organisational trust, which, in turn, enhances knowledge sharing. Trust promotes open communication, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas, leading to increased creativity and productivity. Key HRKM factors identified include recruitment strategies, employee training and development, and leadership practices. These elements together create a supportive environment for knowledge sharing, which ultimately boosts organisational effectiveness and competitive advantage. The study also highlights the importance of adapting HRKM policies to the specific cultural and contextual factors of the Chinese art design sector. By recognising the role of organisational trust as a mediator, organisations can cultivate a collaborative atmosphere that encourages knowledge sharing, improving both employee engagement and organisational performance. This research offers valuable insights for managers aiming to optimise HRKM practices, with a focus on trust-building strategies that enhance knowledge sharing and drive innovation in a competitive market.

**Keywords:** Human Resource Knowledge Management, Organisational Trust, Employee Knowledge Sharing, Art Design Associations, Hubei, China

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## INTRODUCTION

Organisations within Wuhan's art and design sector are focusing on fostering an innovative culture to remain competitive, where creativity is essential for success (Mau, 2019). Although Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) is recognized for influencing employee behaviours (Eisenberger et al., 1986), there is limited understanding of its impact on employee proactiveness, particularly regarding organisational trust (Clark, 2023). While the link between organisational trust and success is established (Brown, 2022), the specific dynamics in Wuhan's creative sector, including whether

employee trust proactiveness mediates HRKM and trust management, remain unclear, limiting strategies to optimise HRKM for enhanced organisational performance (Smith, 2023).

Understanding these interconnected issues is essential for organisations in Wuhan's art and design sector, as trust processes are directly linked to organisational success. The ability to foster organisational trust can determine a company's capacity to innovate and remain competitive in an environment that demands constant new ideas and fresh approaches. By addressing these gaps in the literature, this study aims to provide valuable insights that contribute to both academic research and practical business strategies. Specifically, it seeks to clarify the relationships between HRKM, employee organisational trust proactiveness, organisational trust management, and organisational success in the art and design industry. The goal is to offer a comprehensive understanding of how these factors interact and shape competitive dynamics within this creative sector.

The role of HRKM in influencing creative behaviours has been well-documented, with prior studies highlighting how employees' perceptions of organisational support impact their engagement and willingness to innovate (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In the art and design sector, where creativity is paramount, employees' ability to engage in creative behaviours is particularly critical. However, while organisational trust is recognised as a vital component of this process (Mau, 2019; Tham et al., 2017; Pambreni et al., 2019; Herath et al., 2023), there is a lack of empirical research examining its role specifically in Wuhan's art and design industry. The absence of investigation into the relationship between HRKM and employees' organisational trust proactiveness prevents organisations from fully understanding how support systems influence employees' potential for trust. This gap affects their adaptability to market demands and their overall competitive performance (Brown, 2022; Smith, 2023). Bridging this gap requires a focused investigation into how HRKM influences employees' readiness to proactively engage in creative activities, offering valuable insights into improving organisational trust and competitiveness.

Organisational trust management, which involves cultivating a supportive environment that encourages creativity and innovation, is particularly crucial in Wuhan's art and design sector. Given the sector's rapid pace and high level of competition, managing trust among employees effectively can significantly influence knowledge sharing, a key driver of innovation (Brown, 2022). Despite recognising organisational trust as an important factor in enhancing competitiveness (Bilton, 2007; Udriyah et al., 2019; Horani et al., 2023), there is limited empirical research exploring how trust management practices influence employee knowledge sharing in Wuhan's art and design sector specifically. The lack of clarity regarding the mechanisms through which organisational trust impacts success further complicates efforts to optimise trust management practices. Understanding these mechanisms is vital for stakeholders, including managers, business owners, and policymakers, to foster an environment that encourages knowledge sharing and innovation. This study aims to explore the relationship between organisational trust management and employee knowledge sharing, providing insights that can inform both academic research and practical business strategies within Wuhan's art and design sector.

Moreover, employee organisational trust proactiveness, defined as the initiative employees take to generate and implement creative ideas, has been identified as a key component of organisational trust (Lee, 2023). However, the extent to which this proactiveness mediates the relationship between HRKM

and organisational trust management remains largely unexplored, especially in Wuhan's art and design industry. Investigating the potential mediating role of employee organisational trust proactiveness is crucial for understanding how HRKM contributes to trust management within this sector. Fostering trust proactiveness among employees could have significant implications for how organisations structure their support systems to encourage creativity and innovation.

In conclusion, this study seeks to clarify the complex relationships between HRKM, employee organisational trust proactiveness, and organisational trust management in Wuhan's art and design sector. By addressing these gaps, the research will provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors shaping organisational trust in this unique industry. These insights will be valuable for both academics and business professionals, offering practical strategies to leverage HRKM to encourage employee trust proactivity, thereby improving trust management practices and organisational success.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) has evolved into a critical and dynamic field that plays a central role in improving organisational effectiveness and competitiveness. It is defined as the systematic process of acquiring, organising, and communicating both tacit and explicit knowledge among employees, aiming to enhance productivity and effectiveness (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). This process involves knowledge sharing, which allows employees to use shared knowledge to improve their work. Additionally, Odell (1998) highlights HRKM as a strategic tool for getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time, facilitating the exchange of information to improve employee knowledge sharing and organisational outcomes. The strategic importance of HRKM is also emphasized by Beckman (1999), who argues that it formalizes access to knowledge, enabling new capabilities and improving organisational performance and trust. Malhotra (1998) underscores HRKM's importance for organisational adaptation and survival, especially in rapidly changing environments, by integrating information technologies and human creativity. HRKM practices can be broadly classified into two approaches: personalisation, which focuses on human interaction, and codification, which emphasizes storing knowledge as a resource (Hansen, 1999, 2005). These diverse approaches offer organisations ways to optimise their knowledge resources and improve decision-making processes.

The concept of knowledge sharing is closely tied to HRKM, as it is the mechanism through which knowledge is exchanged among individuals and groups. Knowledge sharing is a complex behavioural process that involves individuals expressing and demonstrating their personal knowledge to help others enhance their understanding. It is a key driver of innovation and organisational success (Chong & Besharati, 2014; Luna-Reyes et al., 2008). Von Krogh (1998) identifies challenges in knowledge sharing, noting that individuals may hesitate to share knowledge due to concerns about losing personal advantages or devaluing their intellectual property (Kräkel, 2005; Sun, Han, & Liu, 2008). Despite these challenges, knowledge sharing remains essential for developing new capacities and actionable insights. Alavi and Leidner (2001) describe knowledge sharing as the dissemination of knowledge within an organisation, while Gupta and Govindarajan (2000) expand this to include both the willingness of the knowledge source to share and the recipient to acquire it. Davenport and Prusak (1998) further define it as the interchange of knowledge among individuals and groups. Connelly and Kelloway (2003) broaden the scope to encompass behaviours that facilitate information exchange

within an organisation. Despite the difficulties involved, effective knowledge sharing has been shown to contribute to organisational success, creativity, and strategic planning (Plessis, 2007; Lin & Kuo, 2007). The voluntary nature of knowledge sharing, combined with individual motivations and organisational culture, plays a key role in creating a collaborative environment conducive to sharing (Ipe, 2003; Hansen, 2005).

Organisational trust (OT) is another critical element intertwined with HRKM. The process of HRKM can be conceptualized in four stages: locating, organising, socialising, and internalising knowledge. Initially, management identifies sources of knowledge, followed by organising it to assess the organisation's strengths and weaknesses. The socialisation stage involves sharing and disseminating knowledge, and finally, knowledge is internalised as employees use it in their work. This framework, proposed by Bukowitz and Williams, provides a structured view of knowledge sharing. However, it mainly focuses on knowledge sharing, neglecting other important HRKM processes such as knowledge creation and divestment. A more holistic HRKM strategy should address the entire knowledge lifecycle, including creation, retention, and elimination of outdated knowledge. Moreover, HRKM should be integrated with broader HR strategies such as recruitment, training, and career management to create a dynamic and responsive work environment. Such integration enhances HRKM's overall effectiveness and ensures that knowledge practices align with organisational objectives.

HRKM and OT interact synergistically to improve organisational performance. Effective HRKM is essential for utilising intellectual capital, which is crucial for maintaining competitiveness (Litvaj & Stancekova, 2015). As organisations increasingly recognise the value of knowledge workers, the role of trust in facilitating knowledge sharing and collaboration becomes vital. The synergy between HRKM and OT is especially important for organisations aiming to build core knowledge and maintain their competitive edge (Huang & Lai, 2020). Job design, leadership, and organisational culture significantly influence employees' sense of meaningfulness at work (Bailey et al., 2017). Authentic efforts to foster meaningfulness can lead to positive employee responses, while manipulative practices can harm trust (Krishnana & Scullion, 2017). Trust plays a critical role in filtering and applying information for effective decision-making, which is crucial for learning organisations (Sharif et al., 2020; Rajapakse et al., 2022; Zhou & Azam, 2024). The development of trust, coupled with a learning culture, is key to the success of HRKM initiatives. Communities of Practice, which enhance knowledge sharing and collaboration, also play a crucial role in strengthening this relationship (Glaister et al., 2017; Tasmin, 2017). Ultimately, the successful integration of HRKM and OT within organisations enables better knowledge management, fostering innovation and ensuring long-term success.

Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) has become a vital strategic tool for organisations aiming to enhance their knowledge sharing, collaboration, and competitiveness in today's global market. In industries reliant on creativity, such as art and design, managing knowledge is particularly crucial to fostering innovation. A deep understanding of how HRKM influences organisational success is essential for managing knowledge workers, leveraging intellectual capital, and building trust within organisations. As organisations strive for efficiency and effectiveness, harnessing the benefits of knowledge management is key to maintaining competitiveness, especially when combined with rapid technological advancements (Sharif et al., 2020; Litvaj & Stancekova, 2015).

The theoretical foundations of HRKM can be explored through various relevant theories, including Social Capital Theory, Communities of Practice (CoP), Innovation Diffusion Theory, and the Cognitive Theory of Knowledge Transfer. Social Capital Theory highlights the role of social networks, trust, and connections in facilitating knowledge sharing (Davenport et al., 2019; Nilsson & Ellström, 2020). In creative sectors like art and design, these social interactions are essential for collaboration, as trust among practitioners encourages the free exchange of ideas and fosters innovation. Similarly, CoP theory focuses on groups of individuals with shared professional interests who regularly interact to exchange knowledge and experiences (Whelan et al., 2016). In the context of art and design, CoPs function as informal learning spaces where knowledge is shared, new techniques are developed, and innovative ideas emerge.

Another important theory, Innovation Diffusion Theory, explains how new ideas or technologies spread within organisations. This is especially relevant in creative industries, where understanding how new artistic techniques or design trends are adopted can help foster a culture of creativity and innovation. Additionally, the Cognitive Theory of Knowledge Transfer investigates how individuals acquire, store, and apply knowledge, particularly how tacit knowledge gained through experience is converted into explicit knowledge (Smith, 2017; Abeywardana et al., 2023; Rasheed et al., 2024; Nordin et al., 2024). In the art and design field, this theory is significant because it influences how artistic skills and techniques are transferred, often through mentorship or apprenticeship programs.

The Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm posits that an organisation's resources, particularly its knowledge base, are fundamental to maintaining a competitive advantage (Brewster, Cerdin, & Sharma, 2017). In the art and design sector, the unique skills, experiences, and perspectives of individuals represent invaluable resources. By managing these resources effectively through HRKM strategies, organisations can differentiate themselves in the marketplace. Furthermore, the Narrative Human Resource Knowledge Management approach, which incorporates storytelling, is highly relevant to creative industries. Artists and designers often use storytelling to convey the inspiration and meaning behind their work (Cassoni & Labadie, 2019). Integrating storytelling into HRKM processes helps preserve and disseminate artistic knowledge and ideas within creative organisations.

The "black box" theory, introduced by Savaneviciene and Stankeviciute (2016), highlights the complexity of HRKM practices. This theory suggests that there are hidden mechanisms, or "black boxes," between HRKM activities and employee knowledge sharing. These processes, though not immediately visible, are essential for connecting HRKM efforts with outcomes in knowledge sharing. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial for uncovering how HRKM impacts organisational success. Katou (2018) and Yeung and Berman (2017) stress that organisational trust plays a pivotal role in facilitating knowledge sharing within the "black box." However, further research is needed to fully understand the specific processes that constitute this "black box" and how HRKM practices influence employee knowledge sharing.

Katou's (2018) Operational HRKM-Success Linkage Model suggests that aligning HRKM policies with broader organisational strategies is essential for improving organisational success. The model highlights that HRKM policies should be flexible and tailored to the unique goals of the organisation. Factors such as organisation size, industry type, and capital intensity can influence the effectiveness of HRKM strategies. For instance, larger organisations often have more developed HRKM policies and

systems compared to smaller ones (Katou, 2018; Zheng et al., 2023; Sudha et al., 2023). Moreover, the effectiveness of HRKM in promoting knowledge sharing depends on industry-specific factors, such as the degree of unionisation and capital intensity.

In a related study, Katou (2020) explored the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing in the Greek manufacturing sector. The study found an indirect relationship between HRKM and organisational trust, suggesting that trust significantly influences knowledge sharing within organisations. The study also emphasized the role of employee attitudes and behaviours in fostering a positive organisational environment conducive to knowledge sharing. For example, job training has been shown to enhance employee productivity and contribute to a mutually beneficial relationship between employees and employers (Dearden et al., 2016).

Cassoni and Labadie (2019) proposed a model linking HRKM, organisational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. They identified three key components within the organisational trust process: engagement, competencies, and retention, which are essential for facilitating knowledge sharing. This model demonstrates how HRKM creates the conditions necessary to build trust and promote knowledge sharing. However, Wiblen and Marler (2017) caution that HRKM implementation can vary significantly across business units, emphasizing the complexity and contextual nature of HRKM strategies.

Ultimately, HRKM plays a crucial role in managing knowledge workers, promoting knowledge sharing, and enhancing organisational trust. The synergy between HRKM and organisational trust is essential for fostering a knowledge-sharing culture, particularly in creative industries like art and design, where innovation and creativity are vital for success. Theoretical frameworks such as Social Capital Theory, Communities of Practice, and the Cognitive Theory of Knowledge Transfer offer valuable insights into how knowledge is created, shared, and applied within organisations. Effective HRKM implementation, aligned with organisational objectives and underpinned by trust, is critical for improving knowledge sharing and maintaining a competitive advantage in today’s rapidly changing business environment. The nuanced connections between these variables are visually depicted in Figure 1, providing a roadmap for the empirical investigation conducted in this study.

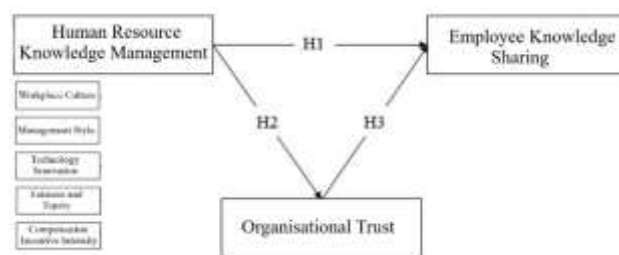


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### Research Hypothesis

The proposed research model will be tested by the below hypotheses in response to the research questions and fulfils research objectives:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between human resource knowledge management and employee knowledge sharing

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between human resource knowledge management and organisational trust.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational trust and employee knowledge sharing.

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between the knowledge management and employee knowledge sharing mediated by organisational trust.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study population for this research focuses on individuals associated with Hubei art design associations, who are key contributors to exploring the relationship between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM), organisational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. This population includes professionals involved in the day-to-day operations of the art and design industry, spanning roles such as artists, designers, managers, and support staff. The purpose of selecting this population is to gather authentic and representative insights that reflect the broader phenomena of these associations. Hubei art design associations, as centers for artistic and creative output, provide a unique context for studying how HRKM practices and organisational trust influence knowledge-sharing behaviors. Since artists and designers are often considered knowledge workers, their contributions to organisational knowledge and insights into the subject are particularly relevant.

The rationale for focusing on individuals within Hubei art design associations stems from the need to understand how HRKM practices, organisational trust, and knowledge-sharing patterns manifest in this specific cultural and industry context. By capturing insights from professionals across various roles, the study aims to encompass a wide spectrum of perspectives within these associations. Acknowledging that individuals at different hierarchical levels contribute to shaping organisational culture and knowledge-sharing practices, the study seeks to include both managerial and non-managerial positions. This diverse approach aims to ensure a comprehensive representation of the various factors influencing knowledge sharing in these organisations.

However, selecting a diverse and representative study population presents challenges. Some potential participants may hesitate to engage due to concerns about time constraints or the perceived intrusion into their work environment. Additionally, ensuring equitable representation across various roles and departments within the art design associations could be difficult. To address these concerns, the study will implement strategies to ensure inclusion from both creative and administrative functions, capturing a wide range of insights. Recognising that knowledge sharing is a multifaceted process that transcends specific roles or hierarchies, the study will adhere to ethical principles by providing participants with clear information about the research objectives and the voluntary nature of their involvement. Informed consent will be obtained, with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity, to ensure participants' confidence.

For sampling, the study will employ a random sampling method, a widely accepted technique in social research that ensures a representative sample of the population. Random selection minimizes sampling bias, where the characteristics of the sample may not reflect those of the population. As Lancaster (2015) notes, sampling offers cost-effectiveness, improved accuracy, and faster data collection, while

ensuring that the sample is representative. Bias in sampling can distort survey results, making random selection critical for maintaining the study's integrity (Azam et al., 2021; Azam et al., 2023). The sample for this study will include employees from various art design associations, ensuring each potential participant has an equal chance of being selected. By randomly selecting participants and confirming their willingness to participate, the study aims to reduce selection bias and enhance the credibility of its findings.

Determining an appropriate sample size is another crucial consideration. As Gray (2014) suggests, achieving generalizability without unnecessary complexity requires careful attention to sample size. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) recommend a sample size between 250 and 500 for populations exceeding 100,000, balancing meaningful results with manageable complexity. For this study, the population of art design professionals in China, including roles such as project managers, engineers, architects, and supervisors, necessitates a sample size of at least 242 participants, in line with the guidelines provided by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). This sample size will help ensure diverse representation across various roles within the industry.

The study will also stratify the sample to ensure a broad range of expertise and experience levels are captured. By categorizing participants based on years of experience, the study can examine how HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge-sharing behaviors vary across different professional levels. Stratification will include employees with over ten years of experience, middle managers with over five years of experience, and those with fewer than three years of experience. This approach provides a deeper understanding of how these variables interact, enriching the research findings.

The instrumentation for this study will consist of a questionnaire designed to capture data from employees within the art design associations. As Neuman (2017) recommends, the questionnaire will be clear, concise, and free from ambiguity to avoid introducing bias. Drawing from established scales on HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge sharing, the questionnaire will be adapted to suit the Chinese context. A five-point Likert scale will be employed for scaled items, a method highlighted by Pallant (2017) as effective for data manipulation and generating meaningful research outcomes. The questionnaire will be divided into two sections: the first will collect demographic information, while the second will focus on exploring HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge-sharing dimensions. This structure ensures a thorough assessment of the factors under investigation and enables the study to meet its objectives within the context of Chinese art design associations.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study faced several challenges, particularly related to time constraints and financial limitations. One significant issue was the difficulty in obtaining permission from top management of various art design associations in China to distribute a large number of questionnaires. Consequently, the scope of the study was narrowed, and only 400 questionnaires were distributed, with 297 valid responses returned, yielding a response rate of approximately 74.25%. These 297 responses were analyzed, and the demographic characteristics of the respondents were categorized based on gender, age, religion, educational level, monthly income, job status, and marital status. Regarding gender, a majority of the respondents were male (62.6%), while females comprised 37.4%. This skew toward male participants may reflect broader industry trends or the workforce composition within the sample. The age

distribution revealed that most respondents were between 36 and 45 years old (39.1%), followed closely by the 26 to 35 age group, which made up 37.7%. Smaller proportions of respondents were aged 46 and above (16.5%), while the youngest group, those aged 25 years or below, accounted for just 6.7%. This suggests that the workforce in the art design sector tends to be in its mid-career phase, with fewer younger or older participants. In terms of educational qualifications, the majority of respondents held a master's degree (57.2%), followed by those with a bachelor's degree (39.4%). Only a small percentage (3.4%) had earned a PhD, reflecting a highly educated workforce, with most participants having at least a postgraduate degree.

Employment status was dominated by those working in the mining sector (71.7%), followed by 20.2% working in drilling, and 8.1% identifying as geoscientists. This indicates that the mining sector is the most prevalent area of employment among the study's respondents. Marital status data showed that the majority of respondents were married (69.4%), while 30.6% were single. These demographic characteristics illustrate a predominantly male, mid-career, highly educated workforce, with the majority employed in the mining sector.

The reliability of the study's constructs was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, a statistic that measures internal consistency among items. According to Babbie (2016), reliability tests ensure that the output is consistent and can be replicated in future studies. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 or higher is considered acceptable for reliable measurement (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In this study, the overall Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.860, indicating high reliability. The individual dimensions of Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM), Organizational Trust (OT), and Employee Knowledge Sharing (EKS) also showed acceptable to excellent reliability scores, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.729 to 0.904 across different dimensions. These results confirm that the measurement tool used in the study is reliable and consistent.

For HRKM, five dimensions were evaluated: "Workplace culture" (WC) had a reliability score of 0.832, "Management style" (MS) 0.762, "Technology innovation" (TI) 0.790, "Fairness and equity" (FE) 0.904, and "Compensation incentive intensity" (CII) 0.775. For OT, "Engagement" (EGT) scored 0.830, "Competencies" (CMT) 0.768, and "Retention" (RTN) 0.777. For EKS, "Profit Making" (PM) had a reliability score of 0.729, "Current Growth" (CG) 0.788, "Technological Improvements" (TI) 0.810, and "Competitive Advantage" (CA) 0.801.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed to identify the underlying dimensions of the study constructs by analyzing correlations among the variables. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used to reduce dimensionality while retaining as much variability as possible. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, which assesses whether the correlation matrix differs significantly from an identity matrix, confirmed that the variables were sufficiently correlated to justify factor analysis (Brown, 2015). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, which assesses the strength of association among variables, yielded a score of 0.857, surpassing the recommended threshold of 0.60 (Hair et al., 2016). This indicates that the data was suitable for factor analysis.

The EFA extracted 12 factors, accounting for 73.32% of the total variance, exceeding the minimum threshold of 50% required for construct validity (Brown, 2015; Cronbach, 1951). All dimensions had factor loadings above 0.50, demonstrating strong relationships between the variables. These results

confirm that the sample was appropriate for factor analysis and that the constructs were valid, further supporting the reliability of the study's measurement tool.

This study conducted measurement modeling for each construct to ensure robustness and validity, in line with the recommendations of Byrne (2016). Measurement modeling is essential for achieving discriminant validity, confirming that each construct is distinct from others and does not excessively overlap. By combining all the constructs, the study evaluated their inter-correlations, ensuring that each construct contributes uniquely to the overall model and the study's theoretical framework.

The goodness-of-fit indices were carefully evaluated to assess the adequacy of the measurement model. The Incremental Fit Index (CFI) was 0.961, and the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) was 0.953, both of which are within acceptable ranges, indicating a strong fit between the model and the observed data. The CFI reflects a high level of incremental fit, while the GFI represents an overall good fit. These indices suggest that the model is appropriate for the data and supports the validity of the measurement model. Additionally, the Parsimonious Fit Index, represented by the Chi-Square divided by degrees of freedom (ChiSq/df), yielded a value of 2.215, which indicates an appropriate level of parsimony while maintaining a good fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was recorded at 0.077, which is slightly above the ideal threshold but still within an acceptable range. This suggests that the model provides a reasonable approximation of the observed data. The fitness values achieved by the model demonstrate that it is well-constructed and validates the study's findings.

To assess discriminant validity, the study conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), linking all exogenous and endogenous constructs within the measurement model. Discriminant validity is crucial to ensure that distinct constructs are not overly correlated, meaning that each construct measures a unique aspect of the theoretical framework (Byrne, 2016; Hayduk et al., 2017; Zainudin, 2020). According to established guidelines, if the correlation between two constructs exceeds 0.85, it suggests a lack of distinctiveness between them, and one of the constructs should be removed (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2020; Zainudin, 2020). The CFA results, show that none of the inter-construct correlations exceed 0.85, indicating that the constructs are sufficiently distinct. Specifically, the correlation between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) and Organisational Trust (OT) was 0.471, and the correlations between HRKM and Employee Knowledge Sharing (EKS) (0.314) and EKS and OT (0.243) were all below the 0.85 threshold. These findings affirm that the constructs are unique and contribute distinctively to the theoretical framework, confirming the achievement of discriminant validity.

The discriminant validity results confirm that the measurement model accurately represents the distinct constructs within the theoretical framework, enhancing the credibility of the study's findings. This ensures that the constructs measure unique aspects of the model and are not excessively correlated with one another. The CFA results validate the discriminant validity of the constructs, which supports the robustness and reliability of the measurement model.

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized theoretical model, using a comprehensive multivariate approach to assess complex relationships among multiple variables. SEM integrates both factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, allowing for the evaluation of both measurement and structural models in a single analysis (Barrett, 2017; Byrne, 2016; Hair et al.,

2016; Kline, 2020). The structural path relationships among the identified variables were assessed based on three criteria: Absolute fit, Incremental fit, and Parsimonious fit. The Absolute fit was evaluated using the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which estimates the goodness-of-fit for the population and accounts for model complexity. An RMSEA value below 0.08 indicates a good fit (Byrne, 2016; Davey & Savla, 2016; Hair et al., 2016). In this study, the RMSEA was 0.069, suggesting a reasonable degree of absolute fit.

The Incremental fit of the model was assessed using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI). The CFI value of 0.911 indicates a moderate fit, while the GFI value of 0.893, slightly below the acceptable threshold of 0.90, still suggests a reasonable approximation of the relationships. Parsimonious fit was evaluated using the Normed Chi-Square (ChiSq/df), which yielded a value of 3.929, indicating some model complexity. Despite mixed results from the fit indices, the SEM analysis provided valuable insights, with significant path coefficients supporting the hypothesized relationships and explaining variance in the endogenous variables (Barrett, 2017; Byrne, 2016; Hair et al., 2016; Kline, 2020).

To improve model fit, modification indices (MI) were analyzed to identify areas for potential adjustments. Two pairs of error terms, e11 and e15 (MI = 25.474) and e39 and e44 (MI = 29.128), showed significant unexplained covariance, indicating the need for adjustments. Double-headed arrows were introduced between these error terms to capture the covariance. After these modifications, the model was re-run, and the expectation was that fit indices such as RMSEA, CFI, and GFI would improve. These adjustments enhanced the model's robustness, ensuring a more accurate representation of the data's underlying structure (Zainudin, 2020; Byrne, 2016).

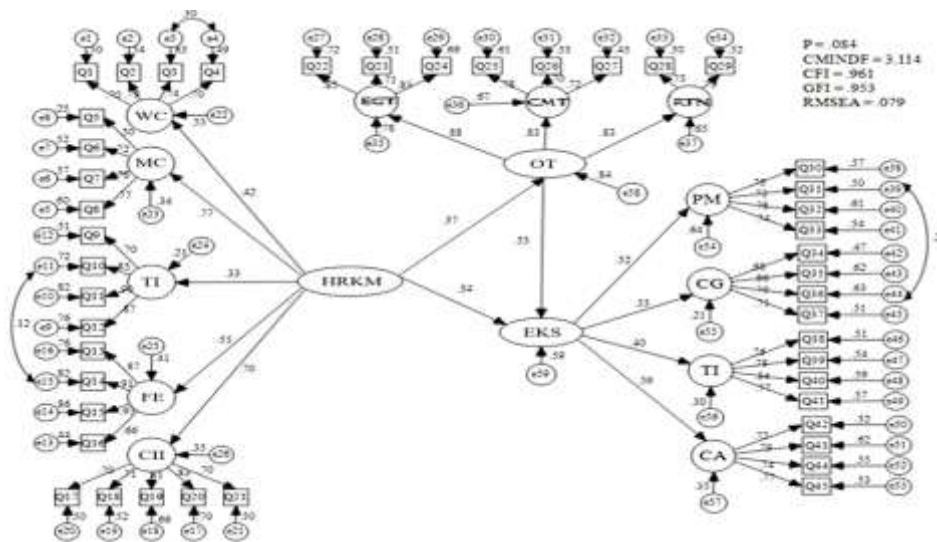


Figure 2: Modified Structural Model

No further modification was required as the model has achieved the required values to be estimated fit.

This study tested all hypotheses using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), and the results indicated a good fit for the overall model. The complete model, which includes four hypothesized paths, is shown

in Figure 2 and Table 1. The analysis revealed that all variables exhibit positive significance, confirming the strength and validity of the proposed relationships.

The first hypothesis posited that there is a significant positive relationship between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) and employee knowledge sharing. The results showed a path coefficient of 0.374, suggesting that as HRKM increases, so does employee knowledge sharing. This finding supports the notion that robust HRKM practices foster a culture of knowledge sharing. Previous research has emphasized that organizations with effective HRKM systems are better equipped to facilitate knowledge transfer, thereby enhancing employee collaboration. The statistical significance of this relationship was confirmed by a p-value less than 0.001, indicating a very low likelihood of this relationship occurring by chance. Thus, the hypothesis is supported, highlighting the importance of HRKM in promoting knowledge sharing among employees.

The second hypothesis tested the relationship between HRKM and organizational trust. The analysis yielded a path coefficient of 0.342, suggesting that higher HRKM practices correlate with stronger organizational trust. This finding is consistent with the view that effective HRKM practices contribute to building trust within organizations. Research has shown that transparent and efficient knowledge management fosters trust, creating an environment conducive to open communication and collaboration. The p-value for this relationship was 0.005, confirming the statistical significance of the link between HRKM and trust. The strong association between these two variables implies that organizations should prioritize HRKM systems to enhance trust, which can, in turn, improve knowledge sharing and collaboration.

The third hypothesis proposed a positive relationship between organizational trust and employee knowledge sharing. The analysis revealed a path coefficient of 0.530, indicating that as organizational trust increases, so does knowledge sharing. This result supports the idea that trust is a key facilitator of knowledge sharing in organizations. Employees are more likely to share their knowledge and insights when they trust their colleagues and management. The p-value for this relationship was less than 0.001, reinforcing the significance of the hypothesis. This finding aligns with existing research that stresses the importance of trust in fostering a knowledge-sharing culture. Organizations that cultivate a trusting environment can better leverage the collective knowledge and expertise of their workforce, which in turn enhances innovation and competitive advantage.

The relationships identified in these hypotheses underscore the interconnectedness of HRKM, organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. The findings suggest that organizations can enhance knowledge sharing by first investing in HRKM practices that promote transparency and collaboration. By fostering an environment of trust, organizations can further encourage knowledge sharing, creating a positive feedback loop where increased knowledge sharing enhances organizational trust, ultimately improving overall performance.

These findings have significant implications for HR practitioners and organizational leaders. Understanding the role of HRKM in enhancing trust and knowledge sharing can guide the development of strategies to strengthen these constructs. Organizations should focus on implementing HRKM systems that prioritize communication, employee involvement, and knowledge dissemination. By

creating an environment where employees feel valued and supported, organizations can build trust, which will in turn promote knowledge sharing.

Moreover, the results emphasize the importance of aligning HR policies with organizational goals to enhance HRKM efforts. HR practitioners should ensure that HRKM strategies are integrated into the broader organizational framework, highlighting the value of knowledge sharing in achieving organizational objectives. This alignment can cultivate a culture of continuous learning and improvement, where employees feel empowered to collaborate and share knowledge.

In addition, training programs that emphasize the importance of HRKM and its impact on knowledge sharing and organizational trust are crucial. These programs should provide employees with the tools and resources to engage in knowledge-sharing behaviors while also focusing on developing interpersonal skills that foster trust and collaboration. Such initiatives can further improve the overall effectiveness of HRKM systems.

The positive relationships identified in this study have broader implications for organizational success in today’s knowledge-driven economy. Organizations that prioritize HRKM, foster trust, and promote knowledge sharing are better equipped to adapt to changing market conditions and drive innovation. In an era where knowledge is a critical competitive advantage, organizations must leverage the collective expertise of their workforce to remain relevant and successful.

The analysis of the model’s fit indicators revealed that the initial model did not meet the optimal goodness-of-fit criteria. The RMSEA value was 0.069, while the CFI was 0.911, and the GFI was 0.893. The ChiSq/df ratio was calculated at 3.929, indicating some complexity in the model. However, after model revisions, there was a significant improvement in fit metrics, with the revised model achieving an RMSEA of 0.079, CFI of 0.961, GFI of 0.953, and ChiSq/df of 3.114. These improvements indicate that the revised model fits the data well and supports its validity. These adjustments align with the recommendations of previous research, confirming the robustness of the model (Byrne, 2016; Davey & Savla, 2016; Hair et al., 2016; Kline, 2020; Zainudin, 2020).

Table 1: Summary of the Main Findings of the Study

<b>H(x)</b>	<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Finding</b>
H1	There is a significant positive relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing	Accepted
H2	There is a significant positive relationship between HRKM and organisational trust	Accepted
H3	There is a significant positive relationship between organisational trust and employee knowledge sharing	Accepted
H4	There is a significant positive relationship between the knowledge management and employee knowledge sharing mediated by organisational trust	Accepted

The main findings of the study, as summarized in Table 1, indicate that all proposed hypotheses were accepted. Specifically, Hypothesis 1 confirmed a significant positive relationship between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) and employee knowledge sharing. Hypothesis 2 also established a significant positive relationship between HRKM and organisational trust. Hypothesis 3 demonstrated a significant positive association between organisational trust and employee knowledge sharing. Lastly, Hypothesis 4 indicated that the relationship between knowledge management and employee knowledge sharing is positively mediated by organisational trust. These findings collectively underscore the importance of HRKM and organisational trust in facilitating knowledge-sharing behaviours among employees.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

In today's globalized business landscape, the importance of assessing success evaluation has gained significant attention, particularly as global competition has intensified. This is particularly evident in well-established industries such as the art design sector, which is marked by creativity and high competitiveness. As markets become increasingly interconnected, understanding the complex relationships between various organizational practices and their outcomes is critical for maintaining a competitive edge. This study focuses on exploring the relationship between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) and employee knowledge sharing within the context of Chinese art design associations. The emergence of globalization has reshaped the business environment, presenting both challenges and opportunities across various sectors. In the art design industry, which thrives on innovation and competitive advantage, the role of effective HRKM practices has grown increasingly vital. The global competition demands that organizations not only attract and retain the best talent but also create environments that foster knowledge sharing and collaboration among their employees. This research aims to offer a detailed examination of how HRKM influences knowledge sharing, thereby contributing to organizational success in this specific sector.

The primary objective of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how HRKM and employee knowledge sharing are interrelated. Through focusing on the Chinese art design industry, the study seeks to uncover the key factors that contribute to successful knowledge management practices. By identifying the most significant elements that promote effective knowledge sharing among employees, the research intends to offer insights that can enhance overall organizational performance. Methodologically, the study employs advanced statistical techniques, particularly Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), to examine the relationships between HRKM practices and employee knowledge sharing. This approach provides a robust framework to understand how various HRKM practices influence employee behavior and organizational outcomes, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of both the direct and indirect effects of HRKM on knowledge sharing.

From an empirical perspective, this study adds to the existing body of knowledge by focusing on a specific industry and geographic context. The results provide concrete evidence on how HRKM practices impact knowledge sharing within Chinese art design associations, thereby deepening our understanding of HRKM's role across different organizational settings. The study's findings also offer practical implications for organizations seeking to optimize their HRKM strategies and improve employee engagement and performance. Practically, the research offers crucial insights for organizations in competitive and rapidly changing environments. By identifying the determinants that

drive successful knowledge sharing, the study offers actionable recommendations for practitioners and managers. These recommendations include strategies for improving HRKM practices, fostering a culture of knowledge sharing, and leveraging employee insights to drive organizational success. The findings suggest that organizations should invest in developing comprehensive HRKM policies that align with their strategic goals and support the effective management of knowledge resources.

In addition to offering valuable theoretical contributions, the study provides an in-depth exploration of the relationship between HRKM and knowledge sharing within the Chinese art design industry. It also addresses how globalization impacts organizational practices and their outcomes, providing further insights into the factors that lead to success in a highly competitive field. The study's methodological, empirical, and practical contributions offer a holistic understanding of how HRKM practices can be optimized to enhance knowledge sharing and facilitate organizational success. Specifically, the research provides valuable insights by analyzing data collected from employees across various art design associations in China, using SEM to test proposed relationships between HRKM, organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. This empirical evidence not only expands our comprehension of how HRKM practices affect organizational trust but also how this, in turn, impacts the extent of knowledge sharing among employees.

Organizational trust is a crucial factor in management, influencing various aspects of employee relations, including recruitment, career development, and retention. This study highlights the importance of building and sustaining trust within organizations as a foundation for effective HRKM practices. Trust within an organization ensures the smooth flow of knowledge and information, which is essential for enhancing employee performance and overall organizational effectiveness. By focusing on organizational trust, businesses can better attract, select, reward, develop, and retain talent, which in turn improves the outcomes of their HRKM strategies. The study's findings underscore that organizational trust mediates the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing. This suggests that businesses should prioritize creating and maintaining trust within their workforce as a strategic approach to enhance knowledge management. Trust not only facilitates the development of employees' skills but also promotes a culture where knowledge sharing is encouraged and valued. The results indicate that fostering a sense of trust within an organization can lead to more effective knowledge sharing, which ultimately drives innovation and provides a competitive advantage.

Furthermore, the application of SEM to test the proposed relationships between HRKM, organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing adds depth to the empirical understanding of these dynamics. By validating the proposed model, the study introduces a new framework that illustrates how HRKM and organizational trust interact to influence knowledge sharing behaviors. This framework offers a structured method for organizations to evaluate and refine their HRKM practices, ensuring that they align with broader goals of enhancing trust and facilitating knowledge exchange. Practically, the findings suggest that organizations in the Chinese art design sector, as well as other creative industries, should invest in initiatives that build and sustain organizational trust. These initiatives may include developing transparent communication channels, offering opportunities for employee development, and implementing fair and consistent reward systems. In doing so, organizations can foster an environment where employees feel valued and are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing.

Moreover, the study highlights the need for organizations to continuously assess and improve their HRKM practices to meet evolving industry trends and competitive pressures. As globalization intensifies competition and reshapes the art design industry, businesses must adapt their HRKM strategies to maintain their effectiveness in promoting knowledge sharing and enhancing employee performance. The empirical evidence presented in this study provides a foundation for these adaptations, offering insights that can guide future HRKM interventions and strategies. Additionally, the study's findings extend beyond the context of Chinese art design associations. The insights gained can be applied to other industries and geographic locations, offering a broader understanding of the relationship between HRKM, organizational trust, and knowledge sharing. By examining these relationships in diverse organizational settings, researchers and practitioners can refine and expand the framework developed in this study, enhancing its relevance across various contexts.

The empirical implications of this research emphasize the importance of organizational trust in facilitating effective HRKM practices and promoting knowledge sharing. The use of SEM to test these relationships provides a robust framework for understanding how HRKM practices influence organizational trust and employee knowledge sharing. By focusing on trust, organizations can better support their employees, foster innovation, and achieve competitive success in an increasingly globalized market. Methodologically, this study addresses an important gap in the literature, specifically regarding the mechanisms linking HRKM to organizational trust. Previous research has highlighted the lack of clear frameworks to understand how HRKM practices influence trust and, subsequently, knowledge sharing (Treblay et al., 2016; Yeung & Berman, 2017; Wulandari et al., 2023; Ranawaka et al., 2023). By filling this gap, the study contributes significantly to both academic research and practical applications within the Chinese context.

A key methodological contribution of this research is the development of a reliable and valid measurement tool designed to assess HRKM and its relationship with organizational trust and employee knowledge sharing. This tool offers a robust framework for evaluating these constructs, ensuring that the data collected is both accurate and meaningful. Not only does this contribute to the methodological rigor of research in this area, but it also provides a practical resource for future studies examining similar relationships in various organizational settings. The study's use of SEM to test the proposed relationships between HRKM, organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing offers a comprehensive analysis of these dynamics, highlighting the importance of methodological rigor in understanding these relationships.

In addition to developing a measurement tool, the study offers guidance on best practices for conducting research in this field. The methodological framework established here can serve as a guide for academics and practitioners interested in exploring HRKM, organizational trust, and knowledge sharing. By detailing the processes of developing and validating the measurement tool, the study provides a practical roadmap for future research efforts. The findings from this research underline the need for continued methodological development in the HRKM field, suggesting that further refinement of measurement tools and methodologies is needed.

Finally, the study's focus on the Chinese context offers valuable insights into how cultural and contextual factors influence the relationships between HRKM, organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. This contextual focus underscores the importance of considering local factors

when designing and implementing HRKM practices. Overall, this research offers a strong foundation for future studies in HRKM and organizational trust, providing both practical guidance and methodological advancements to enhance the effectiveness of knowledge management practices across various industries and regions.

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