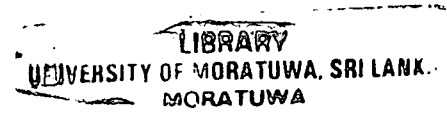


THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AS AN ENABLER OF KNOWLEDGE CREATION IN CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATIONS



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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master
of Science in Construction Project Management

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DECLARATION

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The above candidate has carried out research for the Masters dissertation under my supervision.

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ABSTRACT

Social capital has increasingly been seen as a valuable organisational resource which enables to develop a firm's knowledge base. It comprises both the network of personal relationships and the knowledge resources that may be mobilised through that network. Social capital offers a valuable perspective for knowledge creation in construction organisations since lesser technical nature of knowledge practices in construction. Yet, the existence of enabling role of social capital in knowledge creation in construction context is relatively unexplored. Thus, the research problem is articulated for this study as: whether social capital acts as an effective enabler of knowledge creation in construction organisations in Sri Lanka?

Survey research methodology was used to investigate the research problem through hypotheses. Structured questionnaire was the data collection technique of this study. Sample of 44 managerial staff members related to field of construction was obtained across four large contracting organisations among C1 contractors in Sri Lankan construction industry. The phenomenon of 'social capital as an effective enabler of knowledge creation' was examined through self-administered questionnaire. Regression analysis technique was used to analyse the data.

The empirical findings revealed that social capital which is manifested through structural, relational and cognitive dimensions has significant and positive influence over knowledge creation conditions of accessibility, anticipation of value, motivation and combination capability, which in turn, influences knowledge creation process in construction organisations. Thus, ability of social capital to act as an effective enabler of knowledge creation in construction organisations is confirmed. In particular, relational dimension of social capital is the strongest predictor of knowledge creation comparatively. This empirical revelation of social capital as an effective enabler of knowledge creation helps to make more credible decisions to support and develop social capital within construction organisations, to improve innovative potential and competitive advantage. Careful attention should be paid to nurture social capital especially, relational dimension within construction organisations. Further, strong empirical support is found for the theoretical phenomenon of 'social capital as an important vehicle and enabler of knowledge creation in organisations' particularly, in construction context.

Keywords: Cognitive dimension, Construction organisations, Knowledge creation, Relational dimension, Social capital, Structural dimension

DEDICATION



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I dedicate this dissertation to my dearest mother.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I sincerely thank the following people and organisations who supported throughout this dissertation study.

First and foremost, I am indebted to my supervisor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of University of Moratuwa, Prof. N. D. Gunawardena, for his excellent supervision. His guidance, encouragement and helpful cooperation significantly contributed towards the successful completion of this dissertation.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Head of the Department, Prof. M.T.R. Jayasinghe, specially, Prof. A.A.D.A.J. Perera, and other staff members of the department for their support given to me to complete my dissertation successfully.

Special thanks go to the construction companies and industry practitioners who participated for this study, for providing access to organisations and their contribution and supportiveness towards the study.



Next, I express my heartfelt gratitude to the National Water Supply & Drainage Board, my current employer, specially, Chief Quantity Surveyor of Planning & Design division, Mr. T. S. G. Kariyawasam, for his supportiveness to work on this research.

Finally, I give my immeasurable thanks to my mother and my batch mates who have given me their unstinted support to produce this dissertation successfully.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COP	– Communities of Practice
ICTAD	– Institute for Construction Training and Development
IT	– Information Technology
KM	– Knowledge Management
LAK	– Level of Accessibility to Knowledge
LAV	– Level of Anticipation of Value
LCC	– Level of Combination Capability
LCD	– Level of Cognitive Dimension
LMK	– Level of Motivation to Knowledge
LRD	– Level of Relational Dimension
LSD	– Level of Structural Dimension
REM	– Regional Engineering Manager
UK	– United Kingdom
VIF	– Variation Inflation Factor



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