

Project Summary for IAL Website

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Project Title:	Workplace learning in disruptive innovators: A knowledge management perspective
Project Number:	GA18-07
Year of Approval:	2019
Funding Source:	WDARF
Objectives and intended outcomes of the project:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop a theoretical model that depicts the role of knowledge management and workplace learning in the context of disruptive innovation 2. To investigate the relationships among knowledge management and workplace learning constructs in disruptive innovators in Singapore 3. To provide contextual details of knowledge management and workplace learning practices of disruptive innovators in Singapore.
Project Team	
Principal Investigator:	Assoc. Prof. Alton Chua
Summary of Project (up to 300 words)	
<p>As a small economy whose population is rapidly ageing, Singapore is particularly susceptible to the fallout from disruptive innovation. The challenge is to develop an adaptive workforce. Since disruptive innovation is often unpredictable, a useful starting point to address this conundrum lies with organizations that have created disruptive innovation.</p> <p>Given that disruptive innovation is tightly interwoven with the management of knowledge, and that workplace learning occurs concomitantly with ways in which knowledge is managed within the organization, the purpose of this proposed research is to study workplace learning in disruptive innovators in Singapore through a knowledge management perspective. Three objectives are formulated as follows: (1) To develop a theoretical model that depicts the role of knowledge management and workplace learning in the context of disruptive innovation; (2) To investigate the relationships among knowledge management and workplace learning constructs in disruptive innovators in Singapore, (3) To provide contextual details of knowledge management and workplace learning practices of disruptive innovators in Singapore.</p> <p>Theoretically, this research fills the gap in knowledge management and workplace learning literature which thus far has made little reference to disruptive innovators. On a practical front, it shares the concerns of the larger national discourse on the enhancement of workers' employability through a better understanding of workplace learning.</p>	

Summary of Project Findings, Deliverables and Impacts (up to 500 words)

Using the theoretical model developed as the basis for empirical analysis, it was found that workplace learning is positively correlated with innovation both at the individual and organizational level. Additionally, sharing economy organizations in Singapore are broadly aware of the importance of knowledge management, and they are well versed in applying different knowledge practices, tools and strategies to create value from both internal and external resources. In this way, they improve both employees' innovativeness and organizational innovation performance, as innovation is their backbone.

Learning and knowledge management practices happen concurrently and complement each other; and employees in the sharing organizations are both proactive and initiative in learning, both within and out the scope of their expertise. Moreover, the sharing organizations encourage employees to learn to solve real world problems as they are deeply aware that innovation is their lifeline. With empirical data, this study showed that both knowledge management and workplace learning are effective strategies in developing organizational innovation performance.

Arising from this research, four peer-reviewed papers were published. Additionally, two public seminars were conducted. In terms of impact, specific implications to practitioners and policymakers on two areas are highlighted, namely, what these sharing organizations did well, and strategies to overcome the difficulty they faced. The recommendations would enable organisations to engage in more effective knowledge management and learning practices, and ultimately shape a more adaptable work-force for the future.