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A Tug of War on Impact of Competence Based Trust on Knowledge Transfer Between NGO-Employees and Beneficiaries: An Empirical Study on NGO-sector in Bangladesh

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[Abstract: Knowledge transfer is one of the crucial elements of knowledge management process. Trust works as a lubricant between the knowledge transfers and the recipients in the transfer process. The impact of trust on knowledge transfer is under researched in the NGO-sector of Bangladesh, where the highest number of NGOs in the world is operating. To address this gap, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of competence based trust, a crucial element of trust antecedent, on knowledge transfer between the NGO-employees and the beneficiaries in the NGO-sector of Bangladesh. This article studies the impact of one of the trust antecedents (e.g. competence-based trust) out of three trust-antecedents (benevolence, integrity and competence) of their integrative generic-trust model of Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) on knowledge transfer between the NGO-employees and their beneficiaries. Using multi-staged sampling techniques, total 82-semi-structured interviews (54-NGO-employees and 28-beneficiaries) were carried out. Content analysis technique was used to analyze the interview data. Findings suggest that the NGO-employees' competency based trust on the beneficiaries has a positive impact on knowledge transfer to the beneficiaries, while the beneficiaries' competency based trust on NGOs does not. The impact of competency-based trust on knowledge transfer is under researched in terms of qualitative studies and NGO-sector in Bangladesh, while a few studies examine the impact of trust in general. This study uses geographically diverse samples covering entire Bangladesh. The study's generalizability may be limited to the corporate world as it was conducted in the NGO-sector in Bangladesh. The results may also be influenced by benevolence or integrity based trust, if studied on knowledge transfer. As for practitioners, NGO-management should increase their capabilities with a view to transferring and receiving more quality knowledge from their beneficiaries.]

Key Words: Knowledge Management, Knowledge Transfer, Trust, NGOs

1. Introduction

Knowledge transfer is a two-way traffic process where both the parties (contributors and recipients) actively engage themselves in the transfer activities. For a smooth transfer of knowledge, it is crucial to trust on the competencies of each other (Hasnain, 2019). Knowledge flows between the NGO-employees and their beneficiaries (clients) for the later socio-economic development (Hasnain, 2014) and to achieve experiential knowledge from the beneficiaries by the formers. The NGOs themselves (employees) and the beneficiaries (clients) are the main stakeholders in the NGO-sector (Najam, 1996; Hasnain and Jasimuddin, 2012) in Bangladesh. The beneficiaries are the main stakeholders for whom this sector is created. Approximately 2666 NGOs are registered with the government entitled to receive foreign funds

(NGO Affairs Bureau, 2019) and total 22,000 NGOs are in operations in Bangladesh (Devine, 2003) There are many literature (Lucas, 2005; Singh and Premarajan , 2007; Holstle and Field, 2010; Ko, 2010; Levin and Cross , 2004; to cite a few) examining the impact of trust on knowledge transfer. However, a clear under researched/gap in literature in respect of the following is noticed: (i) limited literature examining the impact of competence-based trust on knowledge transfer (ii) the impact of competence-based trust on knowledge transfer in the NGO-setting is not examined (iii) Bangladesh is not used as the context to investigate the same (iv) qualitative method (interviews) of the primary data collection technique is not employed in any previous literature. So this research has methodological and literature contributions. To address these under researched areas, this study rotates on the following research question: “What is the impact of competence-based trust on knowledge transfer between the NGO-employees and the beneficiaries in Bangladesh?”

The main objective of the present study is to study the impact of one of the trust antecedents (e.g. competence-based trust) out of three trust-antecedents (benevolence, integrity and competence) of their integrative generic-trust model of Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) on knowledge transfer through an application between the NGO-employees and the beneficiaries and vice versa in Bangladesh with a view to finding out the in-depth opinions and ideas of the NGO-employees and their beneficiaries on the subject. The motivation behind the study is to bridge the above under researched areas of knowledge transfer and trust between the NGO-employees and the beneficiaries so that necessary measures can be undertaken to strengthen the ties between these two parties in Bangladesh. The layout of this research is organised in the following order: (i) section-1 opens the introductory issues (ii) the Literature Review part (Section-2) reviews the important literature on Knowledge Management, trust, the impact of trust on knowledge management and NGOs. (iii) Research Methodology (section-3) describes the methodology of this study (iv) the results part of the paper exhibits the findings of the content analysis (section-4) (v) section-5 discusses the findings of the study showing the linkage between the findings and the literature and (vi) section-6 concludes the study.

2. Literature Review

This study focuses on the impact of competence-based trust on knowledge transfer in the context of Bangladeshi-NGOs. This section reviews the relevant literature on knowledge transfer, trust and integrative generic-trust model of Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995), and the previous vital empirical studies on impact of trust on knowledge transfer and NGO-operations in Bangladesh.

2.1 Knowledge Transfer

The prominence of Knowledge Management (KM) has increased dramatically since 1995 (Edvardsson, 2006). It has become an essential part in the dictionary of management now (Nan, 2008). Due to its high and quality productivity (Fireston and McElroy, 2005), it has become an indispensable element in the organisations. Identifying, capturing, storing, retrieving, transferring and application are the vital ingredients in the knowledge management process (Jasimuddin, 2006). Among these elements, knowledge transfer could achieve the highest and attractive position (Argote, Ingram, Levine and Moreland, 2000) as it strengthens trust and ties (Mu, Peng and Love, 2008), helps increase customers’ satisfaction (Goh, 2002), minimises losses in productivity (Argote and Ingram, 2000), adds value (Hogberg and Edvinsson, 1998), and helps formulating strategies (van

Wijk, Jansen and Lyles, 2008) in the organisations. Actually, Knowledge transfer is a process, where knowledge acquired in one organisation affects positively or negatively another one (Argote, 1999; Argote, McEvily and Reagans, 2003; Argote and Ingram, 2000; Argote *et al.*, 2000). The basic concept of knowledge transfer may be compared with the well-known communication process model of Shannon and Weaver (1949), where two actors remain engaged in transferring a message, both of them educating each other. There may be noise between communications, and one should understand the other's message, otherwise the entire communication process fails. Similarly, in the case of knowledge transfer, Davenport and Prusak (1998) find, "the goal of knowledge transfer is to improve an organization's ability to do things, and therefore increase its value. Even transmission and absorption together have no useful value if the new knowledge does not lead to some change in behaviour, or the development of some new idea that leads to new behaviour" (p. 101). For instance, transferred knowledge to the NGO-beneficiaries should be according to their absorptive capacity, and should have a positive impact on their socio-economic condition. If knowledge is not absorbed by the beneficiaries, the transfer has not occurred. Side by side the NGO-employees may gain experiential knowledge from their beneficiaries. The knowledge should be transferred in such a way so that it is fully understood by the recipients, and also so that they do not face difficulties in executing the transferred knowledge.

2.2 Trust and Integrative Generic-Trust Model of Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995)

Trust is a vital variable in many social science disciplines (Bhattacharjee, 2002; Hasnain, 2017). Trust protects the interests (Lucas, 2005), increases interdependency and minimises risks (Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995), encourages learning (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), ensures team working (Pyoria, 2007), helps supplying quality products and services (Peterson, 1998) and works as a lubricant in the organisational process (Bijlsma and Koopman, 2003). Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) find trust as, "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the truster, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that party" (p. 712).

Mayer *et al.* (1995) developed a model on the antecedents and outcomes of trust. They proposed that ability, benevolence and integrity are the factors of perceived trustworthiness. They continue, "each contributes a unique perceptual perspective from which to consider the trustee, while the set provides a solid and parsimonious foundation for empirical study of trust for another party" (p. 717). Ability, benevolence and integrity are the determinants for the trustor to trust the trustee. Mayer *et al.* (1995) continued by arguing, "the domain of the ability is specific because the trustee may be highly competent in some technical area, affording that person trust on tasks related to that area. However, the trustee may have little aptitude, training, experience in another area ..." (p. 717). Ability is a set of skills, competencies and characteristics that permit a party to have authority within some specific knowledge or field and resources. In the NGO-sector ability denotes "the capability and strength" of the NGOs, their employees, the beneficiaries and the donors. Benevolence is the unofficial relationship between the trustor and the trustee (Hasnain, 2017). It is "the extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor, aside from an egocentric profit motive" (Mayer *et al.*, 1995 p.718). It is the intention, love, care, support, good relationship, concern, and help between the NGO-employees and the NGO-beneficiaries and vice versa. Integrity is "the trustor's perception that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable" (Mayer *et*

al., p. 719). Integrity is honesty, truthfulness, correct feedback, correct reflection at all levels and true works for the best causes of both the parties (NGO-employees and the beneficiaries).

2.3 Previous Empirical Studies on Impact of Trust on Knowledge Transfer and Literature Gap Identified

The impact of trust is examined in numerous studies. Usoro, Sharratt, Tsui, and Shekhar, (2007) investigated the impact of trust on knowledge transfer in the context of virtual Communities of Practice. They used the three dimensions of trust (e.g. competency, benevolence and integrity) on knowledge transfer. They find that, all three dimensions of trust have positive impact on knowledge transfer, while the integrity based trust has significant impact than those the competency and benevolence based trust on knowledge transfer.

Lucas (2005) collected data from the respondents of an electric generation company listed in the Fortune 500. Result finds that trust and reputation have positive and significant impact on knowledge transfer in the electricity company.

Singh and Premarajan (2007) investigate the impact of trust and culture on knowledge transfer among the 125-employees of 11-software companies. They find a positive impact of trust and culture on knowledge transfer.

Holstle and Field (2010) studied the relationship of two types of trust (affect-based and cognitive based trust) with tacit knowledge sharing. The examination was carried out on a non-profit service organisation which has 5000 managerial and professional staff working in 185 countries in the world. Holste and Field's (2010) results suggest that adequate levels of both affect-based and cognitive based trust are required for managers and professionals to be willing to share and use tacit knowledge.

Renzl (2008) finds a positive impact of trust on knowledge transfer in utility and software companies. The author made an in-depth study on trust in management, and its impact on knowledge sharing by squeezing fear and getting better knowledge documentation. Data were collected from two companies. One of the firms was from a utility industry, and the other was in the software consulting industry. In-depth interviews with project engineers and managers were conducted, and questionnaires were also circulated. It found that, "trust in management reduces the fear of losing one's unique value in knowledge sharing process" (p. 216) and improves willingness to document knowledge.

Ko (2010) examines the impact of competence and benevolence based trust on knowledge transfer between the consultants and the functional specialists 80 projects 71 client organisations and 36 consulting firms. Ko (2010) finds that benevolence based trust has significant impact on knowledge transfer, while competency based trust does not have significant impact on knowledge transfer between the consultant and functional specialists.

Levin and Cross (2004) surveyed a total 127 respondents –42 from a pharmaceutical company, 41 from a bank, and 44 from an oil company to propose and examine a model two party, or dyadic, knowledge exchange. Results find that the link between strong ties and receipt of useful knowledge is mediated by competence and benevolence based trust. Levin and Cross (2004) find that competency and benevolence based trust have positive relationship on knowledge transfer.

Table-1: Knowledge Transfer and trust Literature Gap Identified

Source	Knowledge Transfer	Competence-based Trust	NGOs	Country: Bangladesh	Qualitative Research
Usoro, Sharratt, Tsui & Shekhar (2007)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Lucas (2005)	Yes	No	No	No	No
Singh and Premarajan (2007)	Yes	No	No	No	No
Holstle and Field (2010)	Yes	No	No	No	No
Renzl (2008)	Yes	No	No	No	Yes (both)
Ko (2010)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Levin and Cross (2004)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

The above Table-1 shows a helicopter view on identification of literature gaps. It is clear from the above table that mentioned all the literature (Usoro, et al., 2007; Lucas, 2005; Singh and Premarajan 2007; Holstle and Field, 2010; Renzl, 2008; Ko, 2010; Levin and Cross, 2004) are addressing knowledge transfer. Usoro, et al. (2007), Ko (2010) and Levin and Cross (2004) examines the impact of competence- based trust on knowledge transfer. No above issue is addressing the issues in the context of Bangladesh. Renzl (2008) uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques to examine the impact of trust on knowledge transfer.

2.4 NGO-Operations and Bangladesh

Najam (1996) identified beneficiaries/clients, donors/patrons and the NGO itself/employees as the most important stakeholders in NGO sector. They interact with many stakeholders such as government, political parties, other NGOs and social organisations, religious institutions, NGO Affairs Bureau (Bangladesh), banks, human rights organisations, clients/beneficial, donors, and the NGO itself. NGOs mainly transfer knowledge and remain responsible to beneficiaries, donors and themselves. Trust among these bodies is paramount for smooth knowledge transfer. This study investigates the impact of trust antecedent (ability) on knowledge transfer between the NGO-employees and the beneficiaries and vice versa.

The NGOs come close to the beneficiaries at the beginning of the preparation of the project proposals or before starting operations, and later during the implementation of the project activities or plan. It is the fieldworkers who establish the bridge between the NGOs and the target communities, with a view to delivering services to the beneficiaries. In Bangladesh the majority of NGO beneficiaries live below the poverty line, looking at food, income, non-food expenditure, productive and non-productive assets, food security and employment creation (Ullah and Routray, 2007). The field and project workers take help from local elites to identify reliable and trustworthy beneficiaries for membership (Devine, 2003). At this stage, they judge the beneficiaries, their

characteristics, and mental and physical capabilities. In brief, the knowledge contributors are convincing themselves about the competencies of the recipients or the beneficiaries, before the transfer process (Levin and Cross, 2004; van Wijk *et al.*, 2008). The knowledge contributors also want to find that the recipients are also capable of implementing the transferred knowledge (Davenport and Prusak, 1998) with a view to developing themselves. That is, before transferring the knowledge, the NGOs trust that the prospective beneficiaries have the ability in utilizing the transferred knowledge for their better socio-economic development.

Before taking membership, the beneficiaries also make a cost benefit analysis (Davies, 1997) of the particular NGO and their employees. Trust is rooted in the fieldworkers' and the NGOs' capacities and skills to solve the clients' problems, and also in the honesty and the moral standards of the NGOs (Ahmad, 1999). They need to believe in the capabilities, generosity and sincerity of the workers. Furthermore, the trustors (the beneficiaries) should trust that the trustees (the NGO-employees) will try and help them, they will keep their word and they come forward if the trustor is in trouble (Mooradian, Renzl and Matzler, 2006). Before going for any transaction, the beneficiaries do not want to see any lack of knowledge and training in employees (Ahmad, 2002), lack of adequate capacity to deliver the services (Sarkar and Ahmed, 2000) or lack of equipments (Nawaz, 2011). These are the vital determinant criteria of membership, and knowledge transfer, for the beneficiaries. Islam and Morgan (2011) identified good staff behaviour, organisational reputation, training programmes, job and income generating as some of the core features of the capacity of the NGOs in Bangladesh.

3. Research Methodology

For the beneficiaries' interviews the whole Bangladesh is geographically divided into seven administrative divisions. From each division a single district, from the selected district a single Thana, from Thana an union and from the selected union 4 beneficiaries ($4 \times 7 = 28$) were nominated for interviews (multi-staged sampling as described by Saunders *et al.*, 1997). Due to the last moment interview withdrawal request of the three beneficiaries, their interviews were not included in this study. So beneficiaries' 25 interviewees were included in the analysis. Total 54-semistructured interviews consisting of their top (18), mid (18) and lower levels (18) based on salary grade (18 from each; $18 \times 3 = 54$) employees were selected for the semi-structured interviews covering all the administrative divisions of Bangladesh.

Regarding the qualitative data analysis techniques Jankowicz (2005) finds "the main technique associated with semi-structured interviews is called content analysis" (p. 270). Now-a-days content analysis technique is popular to academics, commercial researchers and communication practitioners (Neuendorf, 2002). For this research all interviews were transcribed and adopted the content analysis technique for data analysis is used. Three copies of the coding sheet were prepared. To check the coding, two coders were requested. They were given the hard copy of the coding sheets. Firstly, this researcher coded using the symbol tick (ü) in a sheet, Coder-A used the symbol star/cross (* / X) in a sheet and Coder-B used circle (o) in a sheet. The coding sheets of coder-A and B were collected. Now the differences of the coder-A from this researcher are transferred to the sheet of this researcher. Further, the differences of the coder-B from this researcher are transferred to the sheet of this researcher. At this stage, both the coders' percentage agreements with are researcher is calculated separately (e.g. Neuendorf, 2002). [add up the number of cases that were coded in the same way by two coders and dividing by the number of cases. For example: Number of cases agreed=12. Total number of cases=16. So % agreed=12/16=75%].

They had had an excellent rate (e.g. above 90%) of matching with this researcher. The minimum level of 80% is usually treated as normal (e.g. Riffe, Lacy and Fico, 1998).

4. Data Analysis and Findings

The data analysis and findings part of this article is divided into two parts. The first part (paragraph-4.1) presents the results of the impacts of competency based trust on the beneficiaries by the NGO-employees, while the second part (e.g. paragraph-4.2) is presenting the impact of the competency based trust on the NGO-employees by their beneficiaries/clients.

4.1 The Impact of Competence Based Trust on Knowledge Transfer (NGOs)

Total interviewees (e.g. the NGO-employees) are 54 (sample size). The opinions of an interviewee are treated as a single entry (one whole category, regardless of number of sentences, incidents or statements) for the purpose of the content analysis. The transcript of the 54-interviewees is analyzed.

Table-2: Tabulation of Content -analyzed data: Impacts of Competence Based trust on Knowledge Transfer (N=54)

	Units of Analysis	N	%
1	Competence Based Trust has significant impact on Knowledge Transfer	47	87.04
2	Competence based trust does not have significant impacts knowledge transfer	01	1.85
3	Undecided	03	5.56
4	Miscellaneous	0	0
5	No Answer	03	5.56
	Total	54	100*

Note: *Nearest figure rounded

Majority of the interviewees (87.04%) express that competence based trust has significant impact on knowledge transfer. A small minority of the interviewees (e.g. 1.85%) think that competence based trust does not have significant impact on knowledge transfer. 5.56% interviewees have ‘undecided’ or ‘no answer’ opinions. The table-1 exhibits the results of the content analysis.

4.1.1 Competency based trust has significant impact on knowledge transfer: A Few Opinions/views of NGO-employees

Majority of the interviewees gave their opinions that competency based trust is having significant impact on knowledge transfer. In this regard many statements and incidents are cited by the respondents. Some of the incidents and statements as cited by the interviewees are appended below:

An NGO official states,

“Of course there is an impact of the capability based trust [on knowledge transfer]. This a reality that some female beggars established this NGO. Now it is the third largest development NGO in whole Bangladesh. ...we have full trust on their [clients] capabilities. That’s why knowledge is transferred.....We use the capabilities of the clients...”

The above statement of the NGO-official explains as to how the beggars could establish a large NGO in Bangladesh. The NGO-employees trust the abilities of the beggars that if proper and adequate knowledge is transferred to the beggars in Bangladesh, they could establish themselves. The beggars can be self-sufficient and self-supporting. The beggars do not have money, but they have the intellect and knowledge absorption capacity, which is reflected through the establishment of a large NGO.

One of the NGO-official informs,

“Of course this is a factor [competence based trust] which has an impact on knowledge transfer... Let me cite an example, we want to transfer knowledge on short duration rice. In this case, it is seen that the capability of the clients is a factor. Here the clients have to be the farmers who cultivate paddy or rice. If I transfer knowledge to a farmer who does not have lands i.e. landless farmer, it will be futile. So here the capability of a client has an impact on knowledge transfer...”

The significant impact of capability based trust on knowledge transfer is reflected through the practical experiences/examples of this NGO-official. Here the trust of the NGO-employees on the farming capability of the farmers is showing the impact of knowledge transfer to the farmers. That means, before transferring knowledge, the NGO-employees must have reason to believe that the farmers have the basic idea of farming and land. So here the possession of land and basic farming ideas is the capability (ability) of farmers impacting knowledge transfer of knowledge (from the NGO-employees) on the growth of short duration rice.

4.1.2 Competency based trust does not have significant impact on knowledge transfer: An Opinion/view of NGO-employees

A Programme Coordinator states,

“We do not have trust on the capabilities of the clients in our programme...”

This a descending voice where an interviewee has the opinion that competence based trust does not have significant impact on knowledge transfer. Probably the employee has very bitter experiences with the beneficiaries. Also the employee may find, the beneficiaries are illiterate, poor, sometimes corrupted and fails to pay the instalments of micro-loans.

3-interviewees have given undecided answers and 3- interviewees did not answer

4.2 The Impact of Competence Based Trust on Knowledge Transfer (clients/beneficiaries)

Samples, unit of analysis and data preparation are considered for the content analysis to study the impact of competence based trust on knowledge transfer. Table-3 exhibits the impacts of competence based trust on knowledge transfer. Side by side statements and incidents of the interviewees are also incorporated.

Total interviewees (e.g. the beneficiaries) are 25 (sample size). The opinion of an interviewee is treated as a single entry (one whole category, regardless of number of sentences, incidents or statements) for the purpose of the content analysis. The transcripts of the 25-interviewees are analyzed.

Table-3: Tabulation of Content -Analysed data: Impacts of competency Based trust on Knowledge Transfer (N=25)

	Units of Analysis	N	%
1	Competence based trust has significant impacts on knowledge transfer	03	12
2	Competence based trust does not have significant impacts on knowledge transfer	16	64
3	Undecided	01	4
4	Miscellaneous	0	0
5	No Answer	05	20
	Total	25	100

The above content analysis table exhibits that out of 25-interviewees 3 have the opinion that competency based trust has significant impact on knowledge transfer, while 16 interviewees have the opinion that competency based trust does not have significant impact on knowledge transfer. There is an interviewee who has ‘undecided’ (1 out of 25) view, while 05 have ‘no answer’ (5 out of 25) on this issue. The table also shows the percentages of the interviewees’ opinions.

The majority of the interviewees (64%) have the opinion that competence based trust does not have significant impact on knowledge transfer. 12% of the interviewees has the opinion that competence based trust has significant impact on knowledge transfer.

4.2.1 Competence based trust has significant impacts on knowledge transfer: A Few Opinions of Beneficiaries

A beneficiary remarks,

“.... We [the beneficiaries] do not need to buy all the books for them [our children], we do not need to give the examination fees of the children, we do not need to pay the admission fees for our children etc. We get all these facilities from the NGO [NGO's capability]If the NGO does any mistake we tell them....”

The above statement describes the NGOs' capabilities. The beneficiary is not buying the books of his children and also not paying the school fees of the children. These are paid by the NGOs. The statements denote that the NGO is financially capable of supporting the beneficiary. The beneficiary has the belief and trust on the capabilities of the NGO. Therefore, they provide suggestions (e.g. knowledge transfer) to the NGOs.

4.2.2 Competence based trust does not have significant impact on knowledge transfer: A Few Opinions/views of Beneficiaries/clients

A number of interviewees have the opinions in favour of this factor (e.g. Competence based trust does not have significant impact knowledge transfer). Couple of the relevant comments of the interviewees are:

A beneficiary informs,

"...I have a poultry firm. I have reasonable number of chickens there. I used to sell eggs and also chickens. I give them [NGO-employees] knowledge, they also give us knowledge."

The above statement reflects that, the beneficiaries take the loans from the NGOs and they do the business of poultry firms. In the process of business they (NGO-employees and the beneficiaries exchange knowledge).

A beneficiary elaborates,

"When large NGOs like.... started their activities here. They requested for suggestions, advices and information from us. At the same time, the small NGOs also asked for help. Large NGOs like ... is having lot of employees and resources. We did not see the small one and the large one in different eyes. All NGOs were equal to us. We [the beneficiaries] helped them with knowledge and information. Still we are doing the same practice.... Even though, people may have some weaknesses for the large NGOs".

The aforementioned statements of a beneficiary denote that, usually the beneficiaries are comfortable with the large NGOs as the large NGOs have more knowledge, experience and information than those of small NGOs. Hence, the beneficiaries have trust on the large NGOs that they would be able to fulfil their expectations and needs. As per the statements, the beneficiaries also receiving the same from the large NGOs. Both the stakeholders are transferring knowledge believing on their capabilities.

(iii) One interviewee is having undecided answer. Three Interviewees have no answers in this regard.

5. Discussion

This article is investigating two issues related to the competency based trust and knowledge transfer. The first one is associated with the NGO-employees' competence based trust and its impact on knowledge transfer. The second one is connected with the beneficiaries' competence based trust and its impact on knowledge transfer. The content analysis confirms that (i) the NGO employees' competency based trust is having impact on knowledge transfer, while the beneficiaries' competency based trust does not.

Several authors' (Levin and Cross, 2004; Usoro *et al.*, 2007; Holstle & Field, 2010; Renzl, 2008; Ko, 2010; Levin & Cross, 210) results, based experiments on various organisations, support the findings related to the significant relationship between the NGO-employees' competences based trust and the knowledge transfer. This evidence supports the findings of Ko (2010) in which he explains the positive impacts of competence based trust on knowledge transfer. Usoro *et al.* (2007) could find all the three dimensions of trust have significant impact on knowledge transfer. The result of this study is partially parallel to this study. Holstle & Field's (2010) study finds that affect and cognitive based trust has impact on knowledge sharing, which is in line with the results of this study. Similarly, Levin & Cross (2004) support the findings of this study.

Bakker *et al.* (2006) find different results, that is competency based trust has negative impact on knowledge transfer, which is contrary to this study. However, in the Bangladeshi context, it is also reported that most of the NGOs are lacking adequate capacity to deliver the services (e.g. Microcredit, health, education, environment, agriculture, relief and rehabilitation, human and legal aid, food, child sponsoring, women and self-employment and disaster management) to the beneficiaries (Sarkar and Ahmed, 2000). Further, Nawaz (2011) also reports that the many NGOs (especially microcredit) are not well equipped to provide other services and training (beyond microcredit) to the beneficiaries in Bangladesh. So it is not surprising to note, that the NGO-beneficiaries are receiving knowledge from their NGOs knowing fully well that they (NGOs) do not have the capability to deliver the services. Probably, poverty has made them inevitable recipients of services and knowledge from the NGO-employees.

6. Conclusion

Knowledge transfer is one of vital ingredients in the knowledge management process. Trust works as a lubricant between the knowledge transmitters and the recipients. Knowledge transfer is a two-way traffic process, where the experiences, ideas and knowledge may positively or negatively influence each other.

Many researchers could identify various dimensions and antecedents of trust. Among them, Mayer, Davis and Schoorman's (1995) generic integrative trust model is noteworthy. In their model, ability (capability), benevolence and integrity are identified as the crucial trust antecedents. This study has borrowed the capability-based trust from Mayer *at al.*, (2005) to investigate its impact on knowledge transfer in the Bangladesh NGO-sector. The ability (competency) based trust denotes "A belief of the knowledge recipient that the knowledge transferer is in possession of strength of wealth in respect of property/financial resources and expertise in some areas of the knowledge and they will be able to fulfil the desire and expectations of the formers". The impact of trust on knowledge transfer is investigated by many researchers. However, there are still some gray areas exist, which demand to be addressed. A clear literature gap is identified in Table-1. The table puts the following variables: knowledge transfer, competence-based trust, NGOs, Bangladesh and type of research (quantitative/qualitative techniques), and finds that no literature

could address all the variables for the investigation. So far, the impact of competency-based trust in the context of Bangladesh is not examined. Further, the researchers could not employ any qualitative primary data collection technique.

Beneficiaries, NGO-itself, and the donors are the main stakeholders in this sector. In the Bangladeshi NGO-sector, NGO-Affairs Bureau (a government regulatory body for the NGOs receiving the foreign funds), a vital stakeholder controlling the entire NGO-sector in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a country where the highest number of NGOs are working with multidimensional functional coverage. The NGO-employees and the beneficiaries transfer knowledge between them. Competency-based trust has the impact on their knowledge transfer. Applying multi-staged sampling technique, for this study, total 25-beneficiaries and 54-NGO employees' semi-structured interviews were carried out. The content analysis technique was used to analyze the data. The coders were employed to check the reliability of the analysis. Inter-coders reliability is above 90%.

Result of this study finds, NGO-employees' competence-based trust has significant impact on knowledge transfer, while beneficiaries' competence-based trust does not have. The result of this investigation is consistent with various literature. The future researcher may extend this study in the following ways: (i) the impact of competency based trust may be examined in other sectors and country (ii) the impact of benevolence and integrity-based trust, two important trust antecedents, on knowledge transfer may be examined in NGO/ different sectors.

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