

Knowledge Sharing in Pakistani Universities and its Islamic Motives: An Empirical Study of Teachers' Behaviours

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Abstract

This study revolves around the conducts of university teachers and the responsibilities that Islam has posed upon them regarding knowledge sharing. Islam has given the responsibilities to scholars and teachers to spread the knowledge to the community. It is the religious obligation of teachers to convey the knowledge to the humanity for the sake of awareness and consciousness. The study empirically investigates the knowledge sharing behaviours of university teachers in Pakistani universities. It also investigates the ways and channels of communication that university teachers adopt for the sake of knowledge sharing. 1130 university teachers were the sample of this study. Tool of the study was a questionnaire having two parts; Likert scale questionnaire and open-ended questionnaire. Collected data were analyzed with the help of SPSS. Results show that Pakistani university teachers involve themselves in knowledge sharing activities to fulfill their religious obligation. They also have positive behaviour regarding knowledge sharing activities.

Keywords: Knowledge sharing, University teachers, Islam

Introduction

Islam has given great importance to the seeking of knowledge and spreading it to others. The first verses of revelation showed the significance of knowledge. The word "اقرأ" (read) shows that it is the religious obligation

of the Muslims. Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad also showed the importance of knowledge seeking and spreading to others. Prophet Muhammad said: “Allah, the angels, the inhabitants of heaven and earth, the ant in its hole and fish in the sea send blessings upon them who teaches the knowledge to the people”.¹ Conveying knowledge to others is considered one of the good deeds and one who spread knowledge will earn great rewards in this world and hereafter. Prophet Muhammad Says: “With the death of man all his deeds come to an end except three deeds: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge and pious son who prays for him”.²

Knowledge sharing is the process that urges to identify, locate, capture, share, organize, innovate, and add new knowledge. When individuals share their knowledge, they become more competent and organizations gain competitive advantages. Knowledge sharing process makes the employees more confident and capable to do their jobs.

From last many decades knowledge transfer and sharing has become the responsibility of teachers and scholars. They not only teach to the student but also involve themselves in knowledge seeking activities. Higher education sector is the bone of every developed and developing country. At this sector knowledge is disseminated and transferred to the upcoming generation. At higher educational level skill and knowledge is diffused among the students to equip them with necessary skill and training. This diffusion of knowledge, information and skill is accomplished by the teachers of universities. So, the major objective of this study is to highlight the knowledge sharing behaviours of universities teachers.

Review of literature

In Pakistan universities are major sector to provide higher education and knowledge Sharing is the most important component of universities because

¹Abū ‘Isa Muhammad Ibn ‘Isa Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī*, trans. Abū Khaliyl (Riyādh: Dar as-Salām publications, 2007), *Kitāb al-‘Ilm*, Ḥadīth No: 2685.

² Muslim Ibn al-Hajjāj al-Naysabūrī. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, trans. Nasiruddin (Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 2007), Ḥadīth No: 4223.

all staff deal with knowledge.³ It is also considered as more critical issue in universities because academicians' perception and willingness is necessary to share knowledge.⁴ Universities are key agents of economic growth and innovation. Policy makers view universities as knowledge factories having potential of development.⁵ In universities social and cultural capital is built.⁶ Environment of universities are knowledge intensive and in knowledge sharing process role of universities are impressive.⁷

In the past, role of universities was to share knowledge with students by adopting straightforward process. Now the universities functions and responsibilities have been changed. Now universities pay an active role in the life of students and stakeholders.⁸ Universities produce social capital by involving students in economic activities. University graduates participated in economic activities and practically involve in knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer activities.⁹ Now universities are not only conducting

³Dr. Alpana Trehan And Pooja S. Kushwaha, "The implementation of knowledge management system in b-schools." *EXCEL International Journal of Multidisciplinary Management Studies* 2, no. 2 (2012): 252.

⁴Nor Liza Abdullah, Noradiva Hamzah, Rasidah Arshad, Rosmah Mat Isa and Rohayu Abd. Ghani, "Psychological contract and knowledge sharing among academicians: mediating role of relational social capital." *International Business Research* 4, no. 4(2011):231.

⁵ Allison Bramwell and David A.Wolfe, "Universities and regional economic development: The entrepreneurial University of Waterloo." *Research Policy* 37, no. 8 (2008): 1175–1187, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2008.04.016>.

⁶ Matt Symonds, "The next big things is business education." Accessed April, 2020. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/mattsymonds/2014/12/16/the-next-big-thing-in-business-education/2/>.

⁷Roger Fullwood, Jennifer Rowley and Rachel Delbridge, "Knowledge sharing amongst academics in UK universities". *Journal of Knowledge Management* 17, no 1 (2013):123.

⁸Celina Sołek-Borowska, "Knowledge sharing practices in CEMS - global alliance of management education. *Journal of Applied Knowledge Management* 3, no. 2 (2015): 134.

⁹Sołek-Borowska, "Knowledge sharing practices in CEMS - global alliance of management education. *Journal of Applied Knowledge Management* , 137.

classical and traditional research but have shifted basic research activities into applied research having great relevance to industry and technical knowledge. This shift reflects government expectations from the universities. University industry linkage has been developed. Now industry demand for the solution of their problem and universities conduct research on specified issues. Government has also established knowledge parks for higher educational institutions to knowledge sharing activities.¹⁰ Universities are also establishing contacts with industry to commercialize research products, outputs, skills, and profit from learning process. Conversely industry recognizes universities as knowledge driven institutions for their competitive advantage.¹¹

Moreover, today the shifted role of the universities has converted into integration of science, technology and innovation as the foundation of knowledge-based economy. Now universities have come closer to business-oriented model and prepare students to participate in business world especially within global context.¹² For this purpose universities collaborate with business and public sector organizations to exchange the knowledge that makes students noticed by managers of organizations.¹³ Universities are learning organizations and KS is the key dimension of these organizations. Universities are not only providing knowledge to students but also preparing them to participate in practical life effectively and efficiently. Institutional learning strategies and information practices are considered knowledge management

¹⁰ Higher Education Commission, "National awards for best university teachers." Accessed January, 2020. <http://hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/Pages/Best%20University%20Teachers%20Awards/Best-University-Teachers-Awards.aspx>

¹¹ Boo-Young Eom and Keun Lee, "Determinants of industry-academy linkages and their impact on firm performance: the case of Korea as a latecomer in knowledge industrialization. *Research Policy* 39, no. 5 (2010): 625–639.

¹² Benoit Godin, "The new economy: what the concept owes to the OECD. *Research Policy* 33, no. 5 (2004): 679–690.

¹³ Sołek-Borowska, "Knowledge sharing practices in CEMS - global alliance of management education. *Journal of Applied Knowledge Management*, 139.

which are gaining importance day by day in educational institutions.¹⁴ So, knowledge sharing has become now an important concept and unavoidable challenge for universities.¹⁵ Knowledge sharing process enhances the productivity and performance of universities. If universities provide access to the knowledge pools for sharing and use it develops sharing culture and growth of organization.¹⁶ Universities transfer and acquire knowledge by using the communities of practice. Community of practice is a group of people who share views about problem and specific topic and interact with each other on ongoing basis.¹⁷

Universities have now built communities of practice to involve people in knowledge sharing process. Communities of practices are considered in different ways by different people. According to Cross, Borgatti and Parker viewed communities of practice as actionable means for creating a knowledge sharing culture in learning organization.¹⁸ Communities of practice are also observed as group of joined people with internal motivation and common purpose having good relationships with each other.¹⁹ Success of these communities depends upon the active participation of employees. For active

¹⁴ Lisa A. Petrides and Thad R. Nodine, (2003), "*Knowledge management in Education: Defining the Landscape, Half Moon Bay* (Canada: Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education, 2003), 43.

¹⁵ M. Sadiq Sohail and Salina Daud, "Knowledge sharing in higher education institutions: perspectives from Malaysia. *The Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems* 39, no. 2 (2009): 125-142.

¹⁶ Dr S. S. Chahal, and Savita. "Knowledge sharing among university teaching staff: a case study." *Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak, India* (2014): 1-8.

¹⁷ Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, and William M. Snyder, *cultivating communities of practice: a guide to managing knowledge* (Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard business review, 2002).

¹⁸ Rob Cross, Andrew Parker, Laurence Prusak and Stephen P Borgatti, "Knowing what we know: Supporting Knowledge Creation and Sharing in Social Networks. *Organizational Dynamics* 30, no. 2 (2001): 100-120.

¹⁹ Chris Kimble and P. Hildreth, "*Communities of practice: creating learning environments for educators* (USA: information Age Publishing Inc, 2008).

participation in communication and sharing requires a common motive that work as intrinsic motive for sharing knowledge.²⁰ Universities adopt different methods and techniques to facilitate knowledge sharing process;

- Provide training to students according to the latest performance standards of different professions.
- Directs towards scientific research.
- Provide training to teaching staff to train professional people.
- Disseminate and develop technological progress
- Arrange forums and meetings for professional to share the knowledge.²¹

University faculty are hired by universities and HEC to perform the duties of teaching, research and administrative tasks within a specialist subject area. Many people become the part of higher education profession through part time or full-time teaching jobs. Formally, university faculty is responsible for teaching, research, guiding, counseling, assessing the work of students.²² They also involve themselves in research activities, publishing their research work, conducting professional activities and enhancing their own knowledge by following different ways and procedures. University faculty prepare lectures, assess students, attend meetings, prepare research proposals, articles and other publications, supervise students in research and academic work and attend seminar and conferences. Brief description about duties and responsibilities of university teachers are mentioned in Punjab university act (2002) i.e., teaching by adopting different methods and techniques of teaching, guidance and supervision of research work, to interact with students, guidance and counseling of individuals and to assist authorities in curriculum development

²⁰ Alexander Ardichvili, Vaughn Page and Tim Wentling, "Motivation and barriers to participate in virtual knowledge sharing communication of practices. *Journal of knowledge management* 7, no. 1(2003): 64-77.

²¹ Sołek-Borowska, "Knowledge sharing practices in CEMS - global alliance of management education. *Journal of Applied Knowledge Management*, 139.

²² Jones Gary and Sallis, Edward, *Knowledge Management in Education: Enhancing Learning & Education* (London: Kogan Page, 2002), 57.

process.²³ For the completion of these tasks they share abundant of knowledge with their fellows and students.

Teaching is an activity through which the teachers facilitate students in learning process and share their knowledge. They adopt different methods and techniques such as lecture, discussion, demonstration methods, seminars, tutorials, projects, tours and troubleshooting to deliver lesson to students. University faculty use variety of skills for lesson transfer. Performance of faculty is depended also on the style of teaching, efficiency and effectiveness of lesson delivery, innovation in teaching and production of effective and competent students.²⁴ Competent teachers provide deep and broad knowledge by integrating it with skill.²⁵

Methods and procedure

It was a descriptive study in nature and adopted survey research design. Sample of the study were 1130 teacher from the public sector universities of Punjab province. A questionnaire having two parts was the tool of this study. 1st part of the questionnaire was prepared on five-point Likert scale and have questions related to teaching and research activities. 2nd part of the questionnaire was an open-ended questionnaire in which respondents were asked about the knowledge sharing activities, research publications and book writings. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire was assured before sending it to the respondents.

Results and Discussions

Data were collected from 1130 teachers working in the university sector. Almost all of the teachers were highly qualified and have 2 to 15 years job

²³Punjab University act 2002. Accessed April, 2020. [https://pu.edu.pk/file/PU-Calendar-Vol-I/3-Part-I-\(1-228\).pdf](https://pu.edu.pk/file/PU-Calendar-Vol-I/3-Part-I-(1-228).pdf).

²⁴ Mohammad Norhadi Muda and Zawiyah M Yusof, "Conceptual Framework for Knowledge Sharing Initiative in Institution of Higher Learning to Enhance The Teaching Performance and Innovation." *Scientific Journal of PPI-UKM* 2, no. 1 (2014): 10-16.

²⁵ M. H. Siddiqui, *Techniques of Classroom Teaching* (New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation 5 Ansari Road, Darya Ganj, 2004), 44.

experience. Collected data were analyzed with the help of SPSS. Data were presented in the form of tables and figures.

Part I

Analysis of data obtained through Likert Scale

Table I

Analysis of data about the involvement of faculty in teaching.

Sr.	Statements	N	$\bar{x}$	S.D	(95%) CI
1	I provide additional knowledge in the classroom apart from the topic.	1130	4.42	0.494	4.39-4.45
2	I use up to date knowledge and techniques to deliver the lesson.	1130	4.27	0.462	4.24-4.29
3	I relate contents with practical life through examples.	1130	4.26	0.470	4.23-4.29
4	I complete the content material in time.	1130	4.25	0.483	4.22-4.28
5	I encourage students to participate in classroom discussions.	1130	4.32	0.469	4.29-4.35
6	I stimulate collaborative learning.	1130	4.43	0.496	4.40-4.46
7	I am punctual to attend the class.	1130	4.39	0.530	4.36-4.42

Table I showed the responses of faculty members and students regarding the performance of faculty in the field of teaching. The mean value (Mean = 4.42, SD = 0.494) of the item 01 revealed that university faculty strongly agreed with the statement. This showed that university faculty provide additional knowledge apart from the topic to the students in the classroom.

Item no 02 revealed the responses regarding the statement that teachers use up to date knowledge and techniques to deliver the lesson. The mean score (Mean = 4.27, SD = 0.462) of faculty respondents revealed that respondents agreed with the statement. Mean score (Mean = 4.26, SD = 0.470) of item 03 showed complete agreement of faculty with the statement that university teachers relate content material with practical life. The mean value (Mean = 4.25, SD = 0.483) showed that faculty members were totally agreed with the statement that university teachers encourage students to participate in classroom discussions. Item 05 showed the responses of faculty regarding the statement that teachers stimulates collaborative learning process. The mean score (Mean = 4.32, SD = 0.469) of faculty responses showed that they were fully agreed with the statement and they provide stimulation for collaborative learning. Item no. 06 has the mean score (Mean = 4.43, SD = 0.496) of faculty responses. This depicted that faculty support collaborative learning among students. Item No. 07 predicted the responses of faculty regarding the punctuality of teachers in attending the class. The mean value (Mean = 4.39, SD = 0.530) of university faculty showed they were punctual to attend the class. Values of all the items showed teachers were fully satisfied with their performance in the field of teaching. They supported themselves by responding the different items related to the field of teaching. This situation showed the ideal performance of teachers in the process of teaching. Teachers were fully satisfied with the knowledge that they provide to their students. This situation created a doubt in minds about the biasness of teachers regarding the evaluation of their performance in teaching.

Table 2

Analysis of data about the involvement of university faculty in research and supervision.

Sr.	Statements	N	$\bar{x}$	S.D	(95%) CI
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8	I spend most of my leisure time in research.	1130	4.31	0.549	4.28-4.34
9	I involve students in research activities.	1130	4.40	0.580	4.37-4.44
10	I participate in educational gatherings.	1130	4.28	0.543	4.26-4.31
11	I correspond with research students regularly	1130	4.43	0.495	4.40-4.46
12	I honestly supervise students in their research work.	1130	4.39	0.500	4.37-4.42

Table 2 indicated the performance of university faculty regarding their active participation in research work and supervision of students' research work. Mean score (Mean = 4.31, SD = 0.549) of faculty responses depicted the strong agreement with the statement that university teachers spent most of their leisure time in research activities. Item No. 09 predicted the responses of faculty regarding the statement that teachers involve students in research activities. The mean value (Mean = 4.40, SD = 0.580) of university faculty showed they strongly agreed with the statement. The mean score (Mean = 4.28, SD = 0.453) regarding item 10 showed complete agreement of teachers with the statement that they participate in educational gatherings. Item 11 revealed the responses of respondents regarding the statement that university faculty correspond with research students regularly. The mean score (Mean = 4.43, SD = 0.495) showed that they significantly agreed with the statement. Mean value (Mean = 4.33, SD = 0.500) of faculty responses about the honesty of faculty in the supervision of research work were in favour of the statement. It showed teachers honestly supervise the students.

Part II

Analysis of Open-Ended Questionnaire for Teachers

This part is related to the analysis of data obtained through open ended questionnaire. Data were collected from same 1130 respondents of university

faculty from whom questionnaire data were collected. Questions were asked from respondent about their knowledge sharing practices and performance. Responses from respondent were categorize and presented numerically to make sense of data. Here analysis is presented question wise in form of table and figures.

Question I. Do you share knowledge with your colleagues about the field of education? If yes what do you share with your colleagues about the field of education?

Respondents were asked either they share knowledge with other colleagues or not. All (100%) the respondents responded that they share their knowledge with their colleagues. Then they were asked what they share mostly about the field of education. There responses were categorized in different themes of implicit and explicit knowledge according to their responses. Responses of teachers about types of knowledge they share are presented in tables below.

Table 3

Analysis of data about implicit knowledge university faculty share with their colleagues

Implicit knowledge		
Themes	F	%
Personal thought	989	(87.52%)
Patents	340	(30.08%)
Personal skills	1030	(91.15%)
Know how	1102	(97.52%)
New ideas/ innovative thinking	1056	(93.45%)
Suggestions to improve teaching	989	(87.52%)

Table 3 displayed that university faculty share implicit knowledge with others. In implicit knowledge category 989 (87.52%) shared personal thoughts, 340 (30.08%) shared their patents, 1039 (91.15%) shared their personal skills, 1102 (97.52%) shared know how about the field of

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education, 1056(93.45%) shared with their colleagues about their new and innovative ideas and 989 (87.52%) faculty members suggested measures to improve teaching to others. It also showed that almost all the teachers share different types of implicit knowledge in their lives time to time. They shared multiple types of implicit knowledge rather than a single category. Types of implicit knowledge sharing depended upon the demand of others and their own.

Table 4

Analysis of data about explicit knowledge that university faculty share with their colleagues

Explicit knowledge		
1	Educational theories	1019 (96.46%)
2	Conference reports	996 (88.14%)
3	Results of research studies	938 (83%)
4	Annual reports	525 (46.46%)
5	Training modules	121 (10.70%)
6	Project reports	832 (73.62%)
7	Portals and websites	418 (36.99%)

Table 4 represented the themes acquired from the responses of faculty members about what they shared with their colleagues. Above table showed the responses regarding different types of explicit knowledge that faculty share with their colleagues. Teachers shared different types of explicit knowledge at different situation. Result explained that 1019 (96.46%) faculty share education related theories, 996 (88.14%) respondents shared conference reports with their fellows, 938 (83%) respondents share results of different research studies whether they presented in some conference or they got know how about them from somewhere else. Results also provided evidence that 525 (46.46%) faculty share annual reports about education with their friends and 121 (10.70%) faculty members shared training modules with others. On the other hand, 832 (73.62%) faculty shared

project reports and 418 (36.99%) faculty members shared different informative, research related and educational portals and websites.

Question 2. How many publications do you have during last five years in HEC recognized Journals?

Responses of the respondents about their publications were categorized and presented in the form of table below.

Table 5

Analysis of data about publications of faculty in HEC recognized journals during last five years

No. of publications	N	F	%
No publication	1130	485	42.92%
1-2	1130	283	25.04%
3-4	1130	123	10.88%
5-6	1130	118	10.44%
7-8	1130	57	5.04%
9-10	1130	52	4.60%
11 ⁺	1130	12	1.06%

Answers about the HEC (Higher Education Commission) recognized publications are summarized in the table 5. Table showed that 485 (42.92%) faculty member had no publication in HEC recognized journals during last five years. 283(25.04%) faculty members had 1 to 2 publication in HEC recognized journals and 123 (10.88%) faculty members published their 3 to 4 articles in HEC recognized journals. 118(10.44%) faculty members were from those teachers who had 5 to 6 publications in HEC recognized journal during last five years. 57 (5.04%) respondents responded that they had published 7 to 8 articles during last five years in HEC recognized journals while 52 (4.60%) faculty members had 9 to 10 articles during last five years in HEC journals. 12 (1.06%) faculty had published more than 11 their research work in HEC recognized research journals. This situation showed

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that university faculty did not share their knowledge with others because only 1 % faculty members published more than 11 research articles during last five years. This showed the performance of teachers in research. Only small number of teachers have more than 11 publications in HEC recognized journals during last five years and majority of the respondents did not have a single publication. This situation also opened about the knowledge sharing practices of teaching faculty.

Question 3. Are you authored any book during last five years?

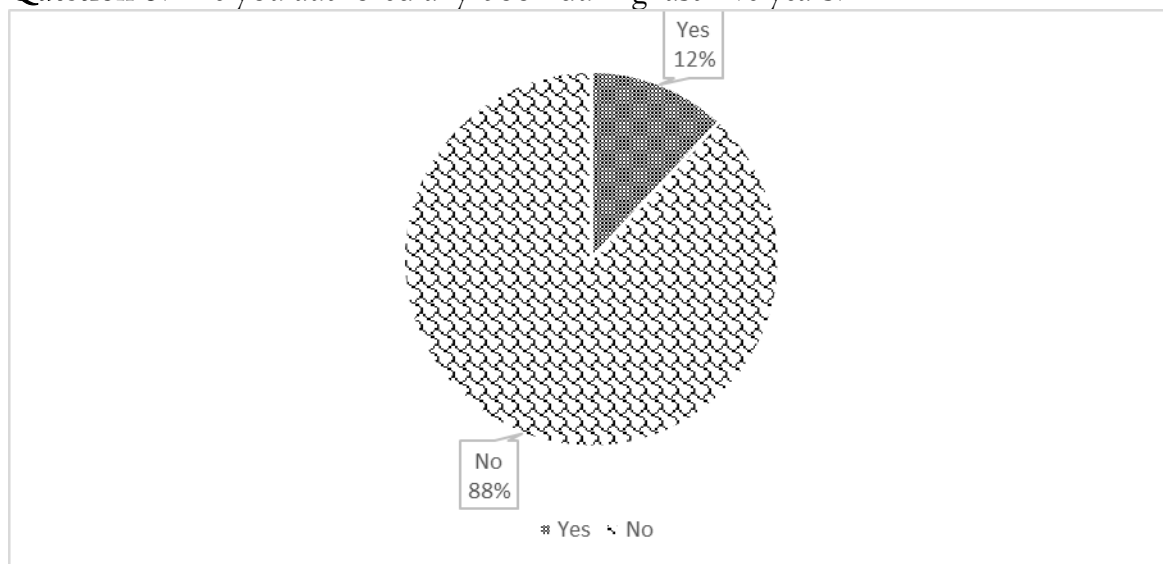


Figure 1. Graphical presentation about authors of books.

Figure 1 displayed the information about the authored work of faculty members. They were asked either they had written some book or not. Graph showed that only 12% (135) faculty members wrote some manuscripts or books while 88% (995) faculty members did not write any book or chapter in a book.

Table 6

Analysis of data regarding the responses of authored work.

	F (%)	Book	Chapter	Edited. Book
Yes	135 (11.94%)	66 (5.84%)	36 (3.18%)	33(2.92%)

Table 6 presented the information about the authored work of faculty members. There responses are summarized in the table above. Table indicated that from 135 respondents who authored any book or chapter in some book 66 (5.84%) authored complete books while 36 (3.18%) faculty members write only single chapter or more than one chapter in different books. 33 faculty members responded that they edited books. This situation indicated that university faculty was not sharing their knowledge in true sense. Only small number of teachers wrote full book or chapter in some book.

Question 4. How do you share knowledge with your colleagues and students?

Table 7

Analysis of data about Channels of communication which is mostly used by university faculty

Sr.	Channels of communication	F (%)
1	Internet/ online discussion/ web-based discussions	760 (67.25%)
2	E/mail/ Blogs	539 (47.70%)
3	Telephone	128 (11.32%)
4	Social media (Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp)	678 (60%)
5	Seminars/ workshops/ conferences	1090 (96.40%)
6	In Job trainings	457 (40.44%)
7	Meetings/ Group work	502 (44.42%)
8	Tea/ lunch breaks	607 (53.71%)

Table 7 showed the channels of communication that teachers used mostly to share their knowledge. Results showed that face to face communication dominant in Pakistani culture as compare it to technological ways of communication. 760 (67.25%) respondent preferred internet-based discussions, forums, and blogs for knowledge sharing process while 539 (47.70%) faculty members were using E-mails and E- blogs for knowledge sharing purpose. 128 (11.32%) respondents responded that they shared knowledge through telephone and 678 (60%) faculty preferred social media to share their knowledge. On the other hand, a majority 1090 (96.40%) of faculty preferred seminars, workshops, conferences and such other gatherings. According to 457 (40.44%) faculty they share knowledge through job training and 502 (44.42%) faculty shared knowledge in departmental meetings and group works. According to 607 (53.71%) faculty they availed the chance of knowledge sharing with others at tea time or lunch time during the break.

Conclusions

It is apparent from the analysis of the data that university teachers, keeping in view the Islamic motivations for knowledge and sharing it to others, share their knowledge with their students and colleagues. It seems they are fulfilling their religious obligation of knowledge sharing. It is also evident from the research that universities and HEC (Higher Education Commission) are providing opportunities to the teachers to enhance and improve their knowledge and skills. They provide opportunities to share ones' expertise with the others. Results have proved that university teachers share the knowledge by adopting different methods and techniques. Results also show that university teachers participate in different kinds of educational gatherings for the sake of knowledge i.e., seminars, conferences, discussions, job meetings, workshops and training. It is also evident from the results that university teachers also spread and share their knowledge and skills through publications and writings.