
Trust in Design: Unlocking the Power of Knowledge Sharing in Hubei's Art Associations

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM), organisational trust, and employee knowledge sharing within art design associations in Hubei, China. The globalisation of the art design sector has intensified competition, highlighting the need for effective knowledge management to drive innovation and enhance organisational performance. The research examines how HRKM practices influence employee knowledge sharing and the mediating role of organisational trust. Data were collected from employees in various art design associations and analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The results show that strong HRKM practices are essential in fostering organisational trust, which subsequently boosts employee knowledge sharing. Trust within the organisation encourages open communication, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas, leading to increased creativity and productivity. Key HRKM factors, such as recruitment, training, development, and leadership practices, play a significant role in creating a supportive environment for knowledge sharing. This, in turn, enhances organisational effectiveness and competitive advantage. The study also emphasises the need for HRKM policies tailored to the specific cultural and contextual factors of the Chinese art design industry. By recognising organisational trust as a mediator, the findings offer valuable insights for managers aiming to cultivate a collaborative atmosphere that promotes knowledge sharing. The research contributes to the literature on HRKM and organisational behaviour, providing practical guidance for enhancing employee engagement and performance. Furthermore, the study recommends that art design associations in Hubei prioritise effective HRKM practices and build organisational trust to optimise knowledge sharing. These efforts will position organisations for greater innovation and competitiveness, ultimately improving profitability in a highly dynamic market.

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

INTRODUCTION

The art and design sector in Wuhan, China, is increasingly focusing on fostering a culture of innovation to remain competitive in a fast-paced and highly creative environment. As the industry is characterized by continuous adaptation and originality, creativity and inventiveness are essential for long-term success (Mau, 2019). Human resource knowledge management (HRKM) has long been recognized as a critical factor that influences employee attitudes and behaviours, playing a central role in fostering creativity and innovation in organizations (Eisenberger et al., 1986). However, despite the growing body of literature on HRKM, there remains a significant gap in understanding how

HRKM impacts employee proactiveness, particularly in terms of organizational trust, within Wuhan's art and design industry. This knowledge gap limits organizations' ability to fully harness HRKM to encourage employee initiative and the generation of new ideas (Clark, 2023). Addressing this gap is vital for companies looking to enhance their competitive edge in a highly dynamic market.

Organizational trust is widely acknowledged as a key determinant of organizational success (Brown, 2022). Trust fosters open communication, collaboration, and the sharing of knowledge, which are essential for innovation, particularly in creative industries. Despite this, the full extent of the

influence of organizational trust on employee knowledge sharing in Wuhan's art and design sector remains under-researched. The creative industry operates under distinct dynamics that require a more nuanced understanding of how trust management practices can influence employee knowledge sharing and proactiveness. Knowledge sharing is critical in creative fields, as it serves as a mechanism through which ideas are exchanged, refined, and developed into innovative solutions. However, the relationship between HRKM, employee trust proactiveness, and the management of organizational trust is complex. The extent to which employee trust proactiveness mediates the relationship between HRKM and organizational trust management remains unclear, especially within the context of Wuhan's art and design sector (Smith, 2023). Without a clear understanding of these dynamics, organizations may struggle to develop strategic approaches that can effectively leverage HRKM to improve trust management practices, ultimately hindering their ability to achieve sustained competitive success.

A deeper understanding of these issues is essential for organizations in Wuhan's art and design sector, where trust processes are directly linked to overall performance and success. The ability to foster organizational trust is a determining factor in a company's capacity to innovate and remain competitive in an environment that constantly demands new ideas and fresh approaches. This study aims to address the gaps in the literature by investigating the relationships between HRKM, employee trust proactiveness, organizational trust management, and organizational success within Wuhan's art and design industry. Through this investigation, the study seeks to offer valuable insights that can inform both academic research and practical business strategies in this sector.

Previous studies have consistently highlighted the role of HRKM in fostering creative behaviours among employees. Employee perceptions of organizational support significantly influence their engagement, motivation, and willingness to innovate (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In the art and design sector, where creativity is paramount, employees' capacity to engage in creative behaviours is particularly critical. Although organizational trust is recognized as a vital

component of this process (Mau, 2019; Tham et al., 2017; Pambreni et al., 2019; Herath et al., 2023), empirical research specifically examining its role in Wuhan's art and design industry is scarce. The lack of investigation into the relationship between HRKM and employees' organizational trust proactiveness limits organizations' understanding of how support systems impact employees' potential to trust their organization. This, in turn, affects their adaptability to market demands and overall competitiveness (Brown, 2022; Smith, 2023).

Organizational trust management, the process of cultivating a supportive environment that encourages innovation, is particularly crucial in the fast-paced and highly competitive art and design sector. Trust among employees significantly influences knowledge sharing, which is a key driver of innovation (Brown, 2022). Despite recognition of the importance of organizational trust in enhancing competitiveness (Bilton, 2007; Udriyah et al., 2019; Horani et al., 2023), empirical research exploring how trust management practices impact employee knowledge sharing in the art and design sector remains limited. The lack of clarity regarding the mechanisms through which organizational trust influences success complicates efforts to optimize trust management practices in this creative field.

Additionally, employee organizational trust proactiveness, the initiative employees take to generate and implement creative ideas, has been identified as a key component of organizational trust (Lee, 2023). However, the extent to which this proactiveness mediates the relationship between HRKM and organizational trust management remains unexplored, particularly in the context of Wuhan's art and design industry. Understanding this mediating role is essential for understanding how HRKM contributes to trust management in this sector. By addressing these gaps, this study will provide important insights for both academic research and practical business applications, offering strategies for leveraging HRKM to foster trust proactiveness and, ultimately, enhance organizational success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) has emerged as a dynamic and evolving field, with scholars offering a wide range of

definitions that emphasize its multifaceted nature. Alavi and Leidner (2001) describe HRKM as “a systemic and organisationally specified process for acquiring, organising, and communicating both tacit and explicit knowledge of employees so that other employees may make use of it to be more effective and productive in their work.” This definition highlights the structured, organisationally driven nature of HRKM, focusing on the processes involved in managing both explicit and tacit forms of knowledge within the workforce. Similarly, Odell (1998) underscores the strategic nature of HRKM, defining it as “a conscious strategy of getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time and helping people share and put information into action in ways that strive to improve employee knowledge sharing.” This viewpoint emphasizes the deliberate and strategic efforts involved in facilitating knowledge dissemination to enhance organizational outcomes, a key focus of modern HRKM practices.

Other scholars have further expanded on the strategic dimension of HRKM. Beckman (1999) suggests that HRKM involves “the formalisation of and access to experience, knowledge and expertise that create new capabilities, enable superior performance, encourage organisational trust, and enhance customer value.” Here, the emphasis is on HRKM’s role in creating new organizational capabilities, fostering trust, and enhancing both performance and customer value. Malhotra (1998) further argues that HRKM is essential for organizational adaptation and survival, particularly in environments characterized by rapid change, integrating information technologies with human creativity to enhance organizational adaptability. Furthermore, Hansen (1999, 2005) introduces a distinction between two primary approaches to HRKM: personalisation and codification. The former emphasizes human interaction and knowledge sharing through interpersonal communication, while the latter focuses on codifying knowledge to store it as a resource that can be used across the organization.

The lifecycle of knowledge management within organizations is captured by Davenport and Prusak’s (1998) definition of HRKM as “the process of capturing, developing, sharing, and effectively using organisational knowledge.” This definition

encapsulates the entire process of managing knowledge, from its creation and acquisition to its dissemination and use within the organization. Earl (2001) offers a broader framework for understanding HRKM, proposing multiple schools of thought that reflect different intended outcomes, tools, and approaches. Taken together, these various perspectives illustrate HRKM as a critical and evolving process that integrates diverse approaches to leverage knowledge for organizational success.

One of the key components of HRKM is knowledge sharing, which is often conceptualized as a behavioral process where individuals collaborate to enhance each other’s understanding by expressing and demonstrating personal knowledge. Knowledge sharing involves the flow of knowledge between individuals and groups, which is crucial for organizational success. Chong and Besharati (2014) describe knowledge sharing as the transfer of both tacit and explicit knowledge between individuals. Von Krogh (1998) identifies the inherent complexities in knowledge sharing, noting that individuals may hesitate to share knowledge out of fear of losing personal advantage or diminishing the perceived value of their intellectual contributions. Sun, Han, and Liu (2008) add that knowledge sharing involves a dynamic, interactive process that goes beyond the mere transfer of information. Instead, it is a bidirectional exchange in which both the source and the recipient must be willing participants.

Despite the challenges, effective knowledge sharing is essential for fostering creativity, innovation, and competitive advantage within organizations. Studies have shown that knowledge sharing leads to positive outcomes such as enhanced organizational success, creativity, and strategic planning (Plessis, 2007; Lin & Kuo, 2007). However, the success of knowledge sharing depends heavily on the organizational culture and individual motivations. Ipe (2003) argues that voluntary participation in knowledge sharing is influenced by a variety of factors, including organizational support, leadership, and the perceived benefits of sharing knowledge. Hansen (2005) similarly emphasizes the role of organizational culture in creating an environment conducive to collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Another critical aspect of HRKM is its relationship with organizational trust. Organizational trust is foundational to the success of knowledge-sharing initiatives, as it facilitates open communication, collaboration, and the sharing of valuable insights among employees. The process of HRKM, as conceptualized by Bukowitz and Williams, involves four stages: locating, organizing, socializing, and internalizing knowledge. Initially, organizations must identify the sources of knowledge within their workforce. This is followed by organizing the knowledge to assess its relevance and reusability. In the socialization stage, knowledge is shared among employees who need it, and finally, the knowledge is internalized and applied to improve organizational processes. While this framework provides a structured approach to knowledge sharing, it has notable limitations. Specifically, it focuses primarily on knowledge sharing and overlooks other critical processes such as knowledge creation and divestment. A more comprehensive approach to HRKM should encompass the entire knowledge lifecycle, addressing the creation, retention, and eventual elimination of knowledge that is no longer relevant to the organization.

The interaction between HRKM and organizational trust is particularly important for building core organizational capabilities and fostering a culture of collaboration. Trust within the workplace plays a crucial role in enabling employees to share knowledge freely and without fear of negative consequences. Davenport et al. (2019) and Nilsson and Ellström (2020) highlight the importance of organizational trust in enhancing collaboration and knowledge sharing. They argue that trust creates a positive work environment that encourages employees to share their knowledge and contribute to the organization's overall success. Huang and Lai (2020) emphasize that the effective implementation of HRKM requires more than just technological solutions; it also necessitates a strong foundation of trust among employees.

In sum, HRKM is an essential process that integrates knowledge sharing, organizational trust, and employee collaboration to create a competitive advantage in the modern business environment. The synergy between HRKM and organizational trust is vital for fostering an innovative and responsive workplace, particularly in industries where

knowledge workers play a critical role in driving success. As organizations continue to adapt to rapidly changing environments, the importance of effective HRKM strategies that leverage knowledge sharing and trust will only increase, making it a key area of focus for both academic research and practical application.

Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) has become a vital strategic tool for organizations striving to enhance knowledge sharing, collaboration, and competitiveness in the modern global market. By effectively managing knowledge within an organization, HRKM plays a critical role in fostering innovation, particularly in industries dependent on creativity, such as the art and design sectors. A deeper understanding of how HRKM influences organizational success can provide valuable insights into managing knowledge workers, leveraging intellectual capital, and building trust within organizations. As firms pursue efficiency and effectiveness, it is essential to harness knowledge management's benefits to remain competitive in dynamic business environments (Sharif et al., 2020). In particular, the effective utilization of intellectual capital remains crucial for organizational success in the 21st century, especially in light of rapidly evolving technologies (Litvaj & Stancekova, 2015).

The theoretical foundations of HRKM are grounded in several key perspectives, including Social Capital Theory, Communities of Practice (CoP), Innovation Diffusion Theory, and the Cognitive Theory of Knowledge Transfer. Social Capital Theory highlights the importance of trust, social connections, and networks in facilitating knowledge sharing (Davenport et al., 2019; Nilsson & Ellström, 2020). This is especially relevant in creative environments like art and design, where collaboration and trust between practitioners enable the exchange of ideas and foster innovation. The CoP framework further explores knowledge sharing through groups of individuals with shared professional interests, who interact regularly to exchange knowledge and experiences (Whelan et al., 2016). In fields such as art and design, these communities act as informal learning spaces, where new techniques and innovations are developed collaboratively.

Moreover, Innovation Diffusion Theory provides valuable insights into how new ideas or technologies spread within organizations, particularly within creative industries. Understanding how artistic techniques or design trends are adopted can foster an environment conducive to creativity and innovation. The Cognitive Theory of Knowledge Transfer is similarly important in creative fields, focusing on how individuals acquire, store, and apply knowledge. Tacit knowledge, which is gained through experience, can be transformed into explicit knowledge through mentorship or apprenticeship programs, making it an important consideration in the transfer of artistic skills (Smith, 2017; Abeywardana et al., 2023; Rasheed et al., 2024; Nordin et al., 2024).

Additionally, the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm asserts that an organization's resources, including its knowledge, are key to maintaining competitive advantage (Brewster, Cerdin, & Sharma, 2017). In creative industries like art and design, the unique skills, experiences, and perspectives of individuals are invaluable resources. Through effective HRKM strategies, organizations can leverage their knowledge base to achieve differentiation in the competitive marketplace. Storytelling and narratives, as emphasized in the Narrative HRKM approach, are also highly relevant to creative industries. Storytelling helps artists and designers communicate the inspiration and meaning behind their work, and integrating this narrative approach into HRKM allows for the preservation and sharing of artistic knowledge and ideas (Cassoni & Labadie, 2019).

The "black box" theory introduced by Savaneviciene and Stankeviciute (2016) further explains the complexity of HRKM practices by referring to the hidden mediating mechanisms between HRKM activities and employee knowledge sharing. The concept of the "black box" reflects processes that are not immediately visible but are crucial to connecting HRKM practices with knowledge-sharing outcomes. Although this theory reveals key mechanisms of HRKM's influence, additional research is needed to uncover the specific elements within this "black box" and how they impact knowledge-sharing behavior (Katou, 2018; Yeung & Berman, 2017). Organizational trust is another crucial factor, playing an integral role in

facilitating knowledge sharing by fostering an environment where employees feel secure in contributing their expertise.

Building on this foundation, Katou's (2018) Operational HRKM-Success Linkage Model emphasizes the importance of aligning HRKM policies with broader organizational strategies to enhance success. The model highlights how HRKM policies must be adaptable to organizational goals, with factors like size, industry type, and capital intensity influencing HRKM effectiveness. In creative industries, where the organizational context can vary significantly, these factors determine how HRKM supports knowledge sharing. Larger organizations may have more developed HRKM systems compared to smaller entities, requiring context-specific approaches (Zheng et al., 2023; Sudha et al., 2023).

Katou (2020) also explored the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing in the Greek manufacturing sector, finding an indirect link between HRKM and organizational trust, which underscores trust's role in promoting knowledge sharing. Employee attitudes and behaviors further influence an environment conducive to knowledge sharing, particularly when employees are equipped with the necessary skills and training (Dearden et al., 2016). Cassoni and Labadie (2019) proposed a model linking HRKM, organizational trust, and knowledge sharing, emphasizing the importance of engagement, competencies, and retention in building trust and enhancing HRKM's effectiveness.

In conclusion, HRKM plays an integral role in managing knowledge workers, promoting collaboration, and fostering trust within organizations. The relationship between HRKM and organizational trust is particularly critical for creating a knowledge-sharing environment, especially in creative industries like art and design, where innovation is central to success. Various theoretical frameworks, such as Social Capital Theory, CoP, and the Cognitive Theory of Knowledge Transfer, provide a comprehensive understanding of how knowledge is created, shared, and applied within organizations. Ultimately, the successful implementation of HRKM strategies, aligned with organizational goals and supported by trust, is essential for maintaining competitive

advantage in today's rapidly evolving business landscape. The nuanced connections between these variables are visually depicted in Figure 1, providing a roadmap for the empirical investigation conducted in this study.

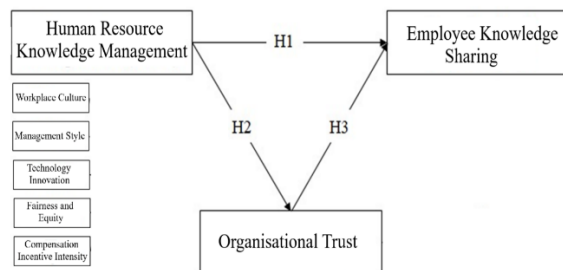


Figure 1: Research Framework

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 focus of this study is to explore how HRKM influences organisational trust and knowledge sharing within the art and design sector, with specific emphasis on professionals associated with art design associations in Hubei, China. These associations provide a unique context for examining HRKM practices due to their role as hubs of artistic and creative output, making them ideal for studying the relationship between HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge sharing.

The rationale for selecting professionals from Hubei art design associations stems from the need to understand how HRKM practices are implemented in a specific cultural and industry context. The study population includes a diverse range of individuals

who are actively involved in the art design industry, such as artists, designers, managers, and administrative staff. These individuals represent different roles and hierarchical levels, all contributing to the knowledge-sharing practices within their associations. By examining this diverse group, the study aims to capture a comprehensive understanding of how HRKM practices influence organisational trust and knowledge-sharing behaviours across various roles within these creative organisations. The inclusion of multiple roles ensures that the study reflects a wide range of perspectives, recognizing that knowledge sharing is a multifaceted process that transcends specific job functions.

However, engaging such a diverse population poses certain challenges, particularly in terms of participant recruitment and representation. Potential participants may be reluctant to engage due to time constraints or concerns about the intrusion into their work environment. To address these issues, the study will ensure transparency by providing participants with detailed information about the research objectives and the voluntary nature of their involvement. Ethical considerations, including obtaining informed consent and ensuring confidentiality, will be prioritized to build trust among participants. Additionally, deliberate efforts will be made to include individuals from both creative and administrative functions within the associations, ensuring a balanced representation across various departments.

A random sampling method will be employed for this study to ensure that the sample is representative of the broader population. Random sampling helps minimize bias and enhances the credibility of the findings by ensuring that all potential participants have an equal chance of being selected. As Lancaster (2015) notes, random sampling is a widely accepted technique in social research that improves the accuracy of results and reduces the risk of sampling bias. This method is particularly important for maintaining the integrity of the study and ensuring that the findings are generalizable to the broader population of professionals within the art design associations. By randomly selecting participants from various associations and confirming their willingness to participate, the study aims to achieve a representative and credible sample.

Determining the appropriate sample size is crucial for ensuring the generalizability of the study's findings. Based on the guidelines provided by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of at least 242 participants will be targeted for this study, which is consistent with recommendations for populations exceeding 100,000. This sample size strikes a balance between achieving meaningful results and avoiding unnecessary complexity, as suggested by Sekaran and Bougie (2016). To ensure comprehensive representation, the sample will be stratified based on participants' years of experience and professional roles. This stratification will allow the study to explore how HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge-sharing behaviours vary across different experience levels, adding depth to the research findings.

The data collection process will involve the development of a questionnaire designed to capture insights from employees across various art design associations. As Neuman (2017) recommends, the questionnaire will be concise and use clear, unambiguous language to avoid biases. The questionnaire will draw on existing scales related to HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge sharing, adapting them to suit the Chinese context. A five-point Likert scale will be employed to facilitate data manipulation and meaningful research outcomes, as emphasized by Pallant (2017). The questionnaire will be structured into two sections, with the first section gathering demographic information and the second exploring the dimensions of HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge sharing. This approach ensures a comprehensive assessment of the factors under investigation and supports the achievement of the study's research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Due to time constraints and limited financial resources, the study's scope was reduced. Permission issues from top management of various Chinese associations restricted broader distribution, leading to the distribution of 400 questionnaires. Of these, 297 were returned and deemed valid for analysis. Based on the 297 responses, the demographic characteristics of the respondents were split according to the categories which are gender,

age, religion, educational level, monthly income, job status, marital status etc. Further discussions are presented below.

Table 1: Demographic Profiles of Respondents

Demographic Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	186	62.6%
Female	111	37.4%
Age		
0-25 years	20	6.7%
26-35 years	112	37.7%
36-45 years	116	39.1%
46 and above	49	16.5%
Level of Education		
Bachelor's degree	117	39.4%
Master's degree	170	57.2%
PhD	10	3.4%
Current Employment Status		
Drillings	60	20.2%
Mining	213	71.7%
Geoscientist	24	8.1%
Marital Status		
Single	91	30.6%
Married	206	69.4%
Total Respondents	297	100.0%

The demographic data provides an overview of the 297 respondents, focusing on gender, age, education, employment, and marital status. Most respondents were male (62.6%), while females made up 37.4%, reflecting a higher male representation. The largest age group was between 36 and 45 years (39.1%), followed by those aged 26–35 years (37.7%). Fewer respondents were aged 46 and above (16.5%) or 25 and younger (6.7%), indicating a predominantly mid-career workforce. Educationally, 57.2% held a master's degree, 39.4% had a bachelor's, and only 3.4% had a PhD, reflecting a highly educated workforce. Employment-wise, 71.7% worked in the mining sector, 20.2% in drilling, and 8.1% as geoscientists, highlighting mining as the dominant field. In terms of marital status, 69.4% were married, while 30.6% were single. Overall, the respondents were primarily male, well-educated, and mid-career, with most employed in the mining industry.

Reliability

Table 2 presents the reliability statistics for the study constructs, indicating consistency between the variables measured (Babbie, 2016). Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency, with values of 0.70 or higher considered reliable (Nunnally & Berstein, 1994). The overall Cronbach's alpha for this study was 0.860, confirming moderate reliability. The alpha values for individual dimensions ranged from 0.729 to 0.904, further indicating a high level of internal consistency across the constructs (Hair et al., 2016). SPSS was used to verify these values.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
HRKM	Workplace culture (WC)	.832	4
	Management style (MS)	.762	4
	Technology innovation (TI)	.790	4
	Fairness and equity (FE)	.904	4
	Compensation incentive intensity (CII)	.775	5
OT	Engagement (EGT)	.830	3
	Competencies (CMT)	.768	3
	Retention (RTN)	.777	2
EKS	Profit Making (PM)	.729	4
	Current Growth (CG)	.788	4
	Technological Improvements (TI)	.810	4
	Competitive Advantage (CA)	.801	4
Overall		.860	45

HRKM = Human Resource Knowledge Management, OT = Organisational trust, EKS = Employee knowledge sharing

The table analyzes the reliability of various variables and dimensions using Cronbach's Alpha, a measure of internal consistency. A Cronbach's Alpha value

above 0.7 indicates acceptable reliability. For Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM), five dimensions were assessed: "Workplace Culture" (0.832), "Management Style" (0.762), "Technology Innovation" (0.790), "Fairness and Equity" (0.904), and "Compensation Incentive Intensity" (0.775), all showing strong internal consistency.

Organisational Trust (OT) was measured across three dimensions, with "Engagement" (0.830), "Competencies" (0.768), and "Retention" (0.777) demonstrating reliable results. For Employee Knowledge Sharing (EKS), the four dimensions, "Profit Making" (0.729), "Current Growth" (0.788), "Technological Improvements" (0.810), and "Competitive Advantage" (0.801), also showed solid reliability.

Overall, the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.860 for the 45 items indicates excellent consistency across all constructs, confirming the survey's reliability in measuring HRKM, OT, and EKS.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to identify underlying dimensions by analyzing correlations among variables. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed significant correlations, validating the suitability of factor analysis. This approach effectively grouped variables, ensuring dimensionality reduction and maintaining variability (Brown, 2015; Hair et al., 2016).

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.857
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		Approx. Chi-Square 8.551E3
	df	990
	Sig.	.000

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy assessed the strength of associations among variables, yielding a value of 0.857, which exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.60 (Hair et al., 2016). This high KMO value indicates that the data is suitable for factor analysis. Additionally, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) extracted 12 factors, accounting for 73.32% of the

total variance, surpassing the minimum threshold of 50% (Brown, 2015; Cronbach, 1951). All dimensions demonstrated factor loadings of 0.50 or higher, confirming strong relationships between the independent and dependent variables and validating the study's constructs.

Measurement Model of the Study

This study further conducted the measurement modelling for each construct. According to Byrne (2016), to achieve discriminant validity, every study must conduct measurement modelling by combining all the constructs. This is done to check the Inter-correlation among the study variables.

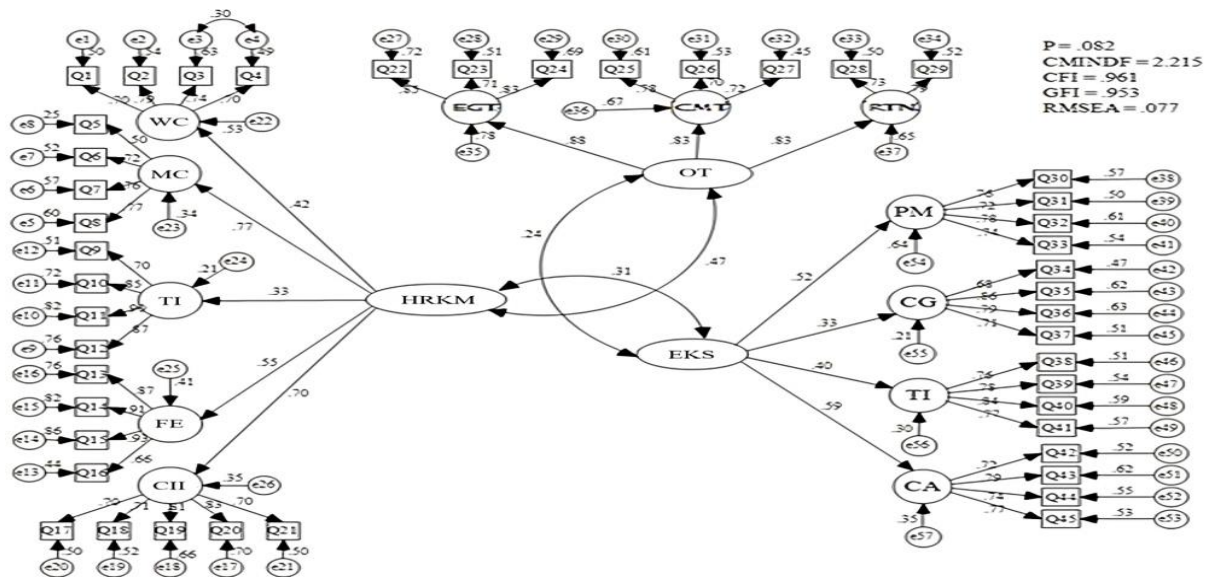


Figure 2: Measurement Model of the Study

This study employed measurement modeling for each construct to ensure robustness and validity, as recommended by Byrne (2016). This technique is crucial for achieving discriminant validity, confirming that each construct is distinct and does not excessively overlap. Goodness-of-fit indices indicated a strong model fit, with a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.961 and a Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) of 0.953, both within acceptable ranges. The Chi-Square divided by degrees of freedom (ChiSq/df) was 2.215, indicating appropriate parsimony, while the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.077, suggesting a reasonable approximation of observed data.

To achieve discriminant validity, this study conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) by linking all exogenous and endogenous constructs to examine correlations. A correlation higher than 0.85 between two constructs indicates a lack of discriminant validity (Byrne, 2016; Hayduk et al., 2017; Zainudin, 2020). As shown in Figure 3 and Table 4, none of the exogenous constructs exhibited correlations exceeding 0.85, confirming that discriminant validity was achieved and that no constructs needed to be dropped for further analysis (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2020; Zainudin, 2020).

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

Inter Item Correlations			Estimate
Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM)	<-->	Organisational trust (OT)	.471
Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM)	<-->	Employee knowledge sharing (EKS)	.314
Employee knowledge sharing (EKS)	<-->	Organisational trust (OT)	.243

To establish discriminant validity, this study conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) linking all exogenous and endogenous constructs within the measurement model to assess their inter-correlations. Discriminant validity ensures that distinct constructs are not overly correlated, confirming that each measures a unique dimension of the theoretical framework (Byrne, 2016; Hayduk et al., 2017; Zainudin, 2020). If the correlation between two constructs exceeds 0.85, it suggests a lack of distinctiveness, potentially necessitating the removal of one construct (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2020; Zainudin, 2020).

The CFA results indicate that no inter-construct correlations exceed 0.85. Specifically, the correlation between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) and Organisational Trust (OT) is 0.471. Similarly, HRKM and Employee Knowledge Sharing (EKS) correlate at 0.314, and EKS and OT at 0.243. These findings suggest sufficient distinctiveness among constructs, affirming the measurement model's validity and enhancing the credibility of the study's findings (Byrne, 2016; Hayduk et al., 2017; Zainudin, 2020).

Structural Equation Modelling

To test the hypothesized theoretical model, this study employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) as the primary analytical tool. SEM is a comprehensive multivariate technique that assesses complex relationships among multiple variables, integrating factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. This method is widely valued in social science research for evaluating both measurement and structural models in a single analysis (Barrett, 2017; Byrne, 2016; Hair et al., 2016; Kline, 2020). The structural path relationships were assessed based on three fit criteria: Absolute fit, Incremental fit, and Parsimonious fit.

The Absolute fit was evaluated using the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), yielding a value of 0.069, indicating a good fit. Incremental fit was assessed using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) at 0.911 and Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) at 0.893, suggesting reasonable approximations. The Normed Chi-Square (ChiSq/df) was 3.929, indicating potential model complexity. Despite mixed results, significant path coefficients supported the hypothesized relationships (Barrett, 2017; Byrne, 2016; Hair et al., 2016; Kline, 2020).

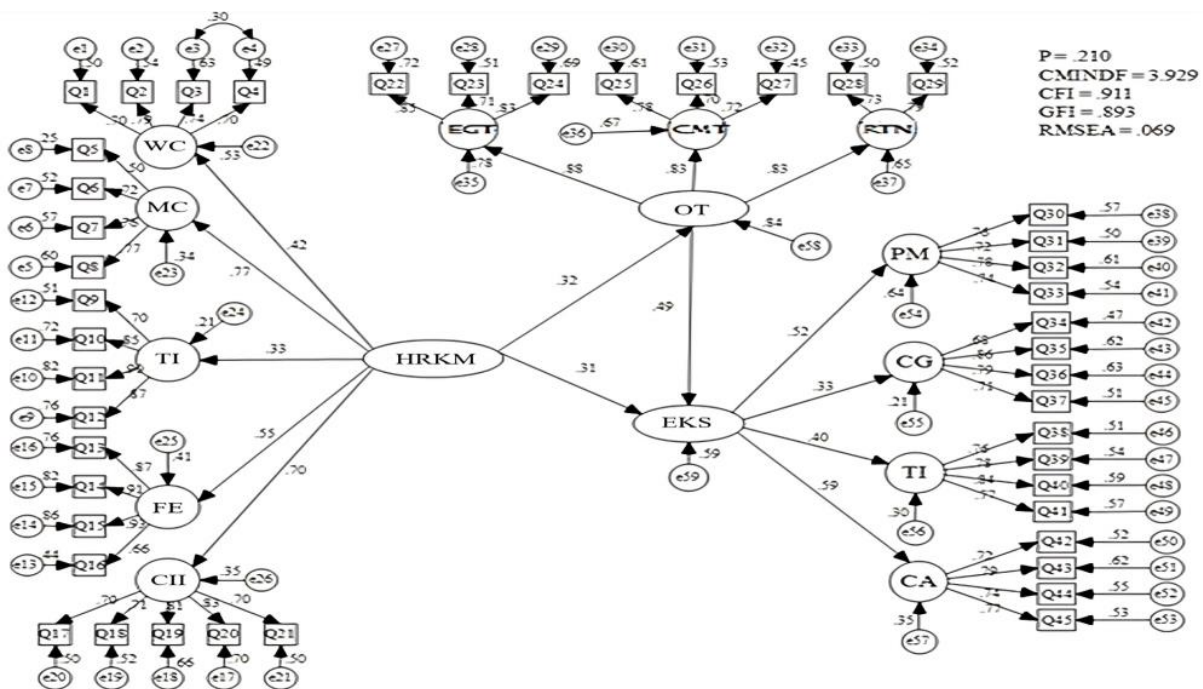


Figure 3: Structural Model

To enhance model fit, modification indices (MI) were analyzed to identify potential adjustments that could improve overall performance. MI values indicate relationships that may not have been included in the hypothesized model, helping researchers address areas of misfit. In this study, MI values were examined for covariance between error terms to ascertain any relationships not considered in the initial model specification.

It was found that two pairs of error terms exhibited MI values exceeding the accepted threshold of 15, as suggested by Zainudin (2020). The first pair, error terms e11 and e15, showed an MI value of 25.474, while the second pair, e39 and e44, presented an MI value of 29.128. These elevated MI values indicated significant unexplained covariance, suggesting that allowing these terms to correlate could benefit the model.

To address this, double-headed arrows were introduced between e11 and e15, as well as e39 and

e44, capturing the covariance between these error terms. This adjustment treated the relationships as free parameters, a common practice in SEM when high MI values are identified (Zainudin, 2020). Following these modifications, the model was re-run to evaluate the impact on overall fit, expecting improvements in RMSEA, CFI, GFI, and ChiSq/df values. Modifications must be theoretically justifiable, balancing statistical fit with conceptual integrity (Byrne, 2016; Zainudin, 2020).

Incorporating these adjustments makes the model more robust, accurately reflecting the underlying data structure and correcting specification errors. Improvements in model fit, as indicated by revised fit indices, demonstrate the iterative nature of SEM, where initial specifications are refined based on empirical findings and theoretical considerations. Ultimately, these modifications lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the investigated variables.

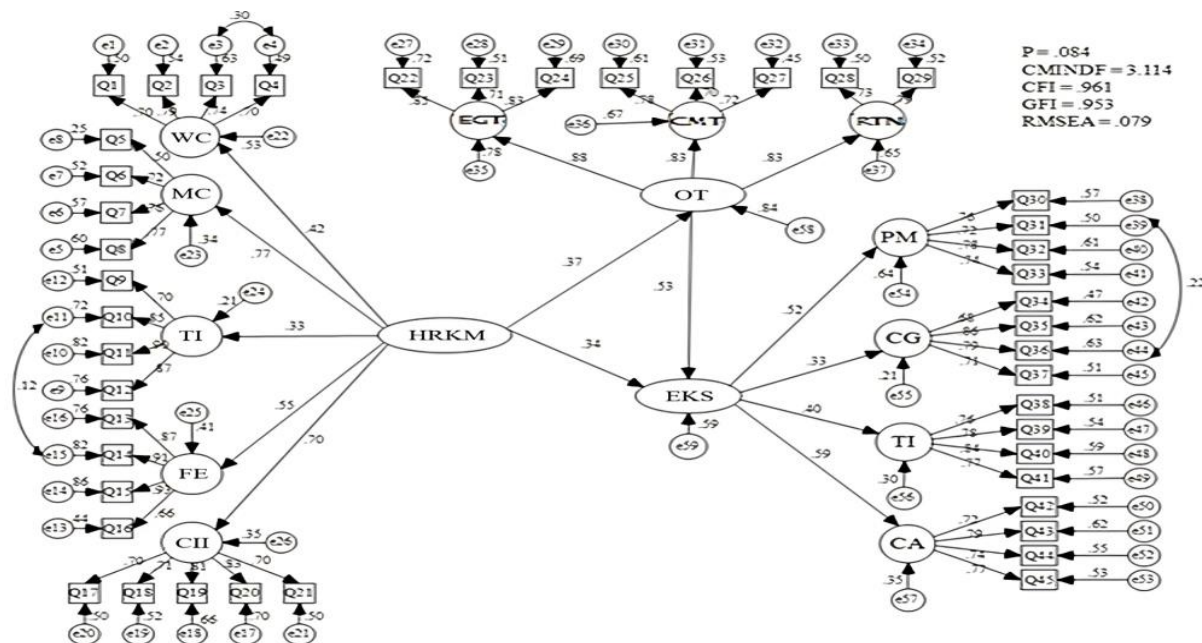


Figure 4: Modified Structural Model

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

Hypothesis Testing

All the hypotheses of this study have been tested through the application of SEM. For the overall

model as a whole, the statistical result indicates a good fit. The complete model inclusive of the 4 hypothesized paths is illustrated in Figure 4 and Table 5. From the model, it can be seen that all the variables uphold a positive significance.

Table 5: Hypothesis Testing

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Organisational trust (OT)	←	HRKM	.374	.075	10.268	***
Employee knowledge sharing (EKS)	←	HRKM	.342	.087	.760	***
Employee knowledge sharing (EKS)	←	Organisational trust (OT)	.530	.110	1.635	***

The study aimed to explore the relationships between Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM), organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing, proposing three primary hypotheses tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The first hypothesis posited a significant positive relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing. The analysis revealed a positive path coefficient of 0.374, indicating that as HRKM increases, employee knowledge sharing also increases. This finding aligns with existing literature suggesting that effective HRKM practices foster a culture of knowledge sharing within organizations. Research indicates that organizations with robust HRKM systems are better equipped to facilitate knowledge transfer, leading to enhanced collaboration among employees. When HRKM practices are effectively implemented, employees are more likely to share their expertise, thereby improving overall organizational performance. The statistical significance of this relationship was further confirmed by a p-value of less than 0.001, suggesting a minimal probability of observing this relationship by chance. Therefore, this hypothesis is supported, emphasizing HRKM's critical role in promoting employee knowledge sharing.

The second hypothesis examined the relationship between HRKM and organizational trust, asserting a significant positive association between the two variables. The results indicated a positive path coefficient of 0.342, suggesting that increased HRKM correlates with higher levels of organizational trust. This finding is consistent with the notion that effective HRKM practices contribute to building a trusting organizational environment. Previous studies show that transparent and efficient knowledge management practices enhance employees' trust in their organization, fostering a culture of open communication and collaboration. The p-value associated with this relationship was 0.005, which is statistically significant and

reinforces this hypothesis's validity. The strong connection between HRKM and organizational trust implies that organizations should prioritize implementing effective HRKM systems to enhance trust among employees, ultimately leading to improved knowledge sharing and collaboration.

The third hypothesis proposed a significant positive relationship between organizational trust and employee knowledge sharing. The analysis demonstrated a robust path coefficient of 0.530, indicating that higher levels of organizational trust are associated with increased employee knowledge sharing. This finding supports the idea that trust serves as a facilitator of knowledge sharing within organizations. When employees trust their colleagues and management, they are more likely to share their knowledge and insights freely. The p-value for this relationship was less than 0.001, further supporting this hypothesis's significance. The positive correlation aligns with existing research emphasizing trust's importance in enhancing a knowledge-sharing culture. Organizations that cultivate an atmosphere of trust are better positioned to leverage their workforce's collective knowledge and expertise, driving innovation and competitive advantage.

The relationships established in these hypotheses highlight the interconnectedness of HRKM, organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. The findings suggest that organizations can enhance knowledge sharing by first investing in effective HRKM practices that promote transparency and collaboration. By doing so, they can build trust among employees, further facilitating knowledge sharing. This creates a positive feedback loop where increased knowledge sharing enhances organizational trust, ultimately improving performance.

Furthermore, the findings have significant implications for HR practitioners and organizational

leaders. Understanding HRKM's critical role in enhancing organizational trust and employee knowledge sharing can inform strategies aimed at enhancing these constructs. Organizations should implement HRKM systems prioritizing effective communication, employee involvement, and knowledge dissemination. By creating an environment where employees feel valued, organizations can cultivate trust, encouraging knowledge sharing.

Moreover, the results underscore the importance of aligning HR policies and practices with organizational goals to enhance HRKM initiatives' overall effectiveness. HR practitioners must ensure HRKM efforts integrate into broader organizational strategy, emphasizing knowledge sharing's value in achieving objectives. This alignment fosters a culture of continuous learning and improvement, empowering employees to share knowledge and collaborate effectively.

Additionally, organizations should consider implementing training programs emphasizing HRKM's importance and its impact on employee knowledge sharing and organizational trust. By providing employees with the necessary tools and resources, organizations can enhance HRKM systems' overall effectiveness, focusing on building interpersonal skills that foster trust and collaboration.

The positive relationships identified have broader implications for organizational success in today's knowledge-driven economy. Organizations prioritizing HRKM, fostering trust, and promoting 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 their workforce's collective expertise to remain relevant and successful.

Ultimately, this study provides robust evidence supporting the proposed hypotheses regarding the relationships between HRKM, organizational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. The findings underscore the importance of effective HRKM practices in enhancing trust and promoting knowledge sharing. By implementing HRKM systems prioritizing transparency, collaboration, and

employee involvement, organizations can enhance trust, leading to increased knowledge sharing and improved performance. This research highlights HRKM's critical role in creating a culture of knowledge sharing essential for organizations seeking to thrive in a rapidly evolving business environment.

The analysis of the model's fit indicators reveals that the initial model did not achieve an optimal fit according to the goodness-of-fit criteria. Specifically, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.069, while the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.911 and the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) was 0.893. Additionally, the Chi-Squared to degrees of freedom ratio (ChiSq/df) was calculated at 3.929. Following model revision, the revised model showed notable improvement with an RMSEA of 0.079, a CFI of 0.961, a GFI of 0.953, and a ChiSq/df ratio of 3.114, supporting its validity (Byrne, 2016; Davey & Savla, 2016; Hair et al., 2016; Kline, 2020; Zainudin, 2020).

Table 5: Summary of the Main Findings of the Study

H(x)	Hypothesis	Finding
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, summarized in Table 5, 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 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 underscore the importance of HRKM and organisational trust in facilitating knowledge-sharing behaviours among employees.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The primary objective of this study is to gain a nuanced understanding of the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing. By exploring this relationship within the specific context of the Chinese art design industry, the study seeks to identify the key determinants that contribute to successful knowledge management and sharing. The research aims to pinpoint which factors are most influential in promoting effective knowledge sharing among employees, thereby enhancing overall organisational performance. From a methodological perspective, this study employs rigorous analytical techniques to examine the relationships between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing. Utilizing advanced statistical methods and structural equation modelling, the research provides a robust framework for understanding how various HRKM practices impact employee behaviour and organisational outcomes. This approach allows for a detailed exploration of the direct and indirect effects of HRKM on knowledge sharing, offering valuable insights into the mechanisms that drive success in the art design sector.

Empirically, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by focusing on a specific industry and geographical context. The findings provide empirical evidence on how HRKM practices influence knowledge sharing in the Chinese art design associations, adding depth to the broader understanding of HRKM's role in different

organisational settings. The study's results offer practical implications for organisations looking to optimise their HRKM strategies and improve employee engagement and performance. Practically, the study's implications are significant for organisations operating in competitive and dynamic environments. By identifying the key determinants of successful knowledge sharing, the research provides actionable recommendations for practitioners and managers. These recommendations include strategies for enhancing HRKM practices, fostering a culture of knowledge sharing, and leveraging employee insights to drive organisational success. The findings suggest that organisations should invest in developing comprehensive HRKM policies that align with their strategic goals and support the effective management of knowledge resources.

Furthermore, the study offers a detailed exploration of the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing within the Chinese art design industry. By addressing the impact of globalisation on organisational practices and outcomes, the research provides valuable insights into the determinants of success in a highly competitive field. The methodological, empirical, and practical contributions of the study offer a comprehensive understanding of how HRKM practices can be optimised to enhance knowledge sharing and achieve organisational success. From an empirical standpoint, this study offers valuable insights by analysing data collected from employees across various art design associations in China. The use of structural modelling to test the proposed relationships between HRKM and organisational trust in relation to employee knowledge sharing has significantly contributed to understanding these dynamics. This empirical evidence enhances our comprehension of how HRKM practices impact organisational trust and subsequently influence the extent of knowledge sharing among employees.

Organisational trust is a critical concept in management, influencing numerous aspects of employee relations, including acquisition, career planning, and retention. The study underscores the importance of enhancing a trusting organisational environment as a foundation for effective HRKM practices. Trust within an organisation facilitates the smooth flow of knowledge and information,

essential for enhancing employee performance and overall organisational effectiveness. By focusing on organisational trust, organisations can better attract, select, reward, develop, and retain talent, thereby improving their HRKM strategies and outcomes. The empirical evidence provided by this study highlights the central role of organisational trust in mediating the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing. This finding suggests that organisations should prioritise building and maintaining trust within their workforce as a strategic approach to enhance knowledge management. Trust not only supports the development of employees' skills and abilities but also fosters a culture where knowledge sharing is encouraged and valued. The study's results indicate that a strong sense of trust within the organisation can lead to more effective knowledge sharing, which in turn can drive innovation and competitive advantage.

Moreover, the study's application of structural modelling to test the proposed relationships adds depth to the empirical understanding of these dynamics. By validating the proposed model, the study contributes to developing a new framework that elucidates how HRKM and organisational trust interact to influence employee knowledge sharing. This framework provides a structured approach for organisations to evaluate and enhance their HRKM practices, ensuring that they align with the broader goals of enhancing trust and facilitating knowledge exchange. In practical terms, the findings suggest that organisations operating within the art design sector in China, and potentially in other creative industries, should invest in initiatives that build and sustain organisational trust. This might include developing transparent communication channels, offering opportunities for employee development, and implementing fair and consistent reward systems. By doing so, organisations can create an environment where employees feel valued and are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing behaviours.

Additionally, the study highlights the need for organisations to continuously assess and refine their Human Resource Knowledge Management (HRKM) practices in response to evolving industry trends and competitive pressures. As globalisation intensifies competition and alters the dynamics of

the art design industry, organisations must adapt their HRKM strategies to ensure they remain effective in promoting knowledge sharing and enhancing employee performance. The empirical evidence provided by this study serves as a foundation for such adaptations, offering insights that can guide future HRKM interventions and strategies. Furthermore, the study's empirical contributions extend beyond the immediate context of Chinese art design associations. The insights gained can be applied to other sectors and geographical locations, thereby providing a broader understanding of the relationship between HRKM, organisational trust, and knowledge sharing. By exploring these relationships in different organisational settings, researchers and practitioners can further refine and expand the framework developed in this study, enhancing its applicability and relevance across various contexts.

The empirical implications of this study emphasise the significance of organisational trust in facilitating effective HRKM practices and promoting employee knowledge sharing. The application of structural equation modelling (SEM) to test the proposed relationships provides a robust framework for understanding these dynamics and offers practical insights for organisations aiming to improve their knowledge management strategies. By focusing on trust and its role in enhancing HRKM, organisations can better support their employees, drive innovation, and achieve competitive success in an increasingly globalised market. Methodologically, this study addresses a notable gap in the literature regarding the mechanisms linking HRKM to organisational trust. Previous research has often highlighted the lack of a clear and systematic approach to understanding how HRKM practices influence organisational trust and, consequently, employee knowledge sharing (Treblay et al., 2016; Yeung & Berman, 2017; Wulandari et al., 2023; Ranawaka et al., 2023). By focusing on this gap, the study makes a significant contribution to both academic research and practical application within the Chinese context.

One of the key methodological contributions of this study is the development of a reliable and valid measurement tool specifically designed to assess HRKM and its relationship with organisational trust and employee knowledge sharing. The measurement tool developed through this study offers a robust

framework for evaluating these constructs, ensuring that the data collected are both accurate and meaningful. This tool not only advances the methodological rigor of research in this area but also provides a practical resource for future studies seeking to explore similar relationships in various organisational settings. The study's methodological approach involves the use of SEM to test the proposed relationships between HRKM, organisational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. SEM is a powerful statistical technique that allows for the examination of complex relationships between multiple variables, making it well-suited for this type of analysis. By employing SEM, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of how HRKM practices influence organisational trust and how this, in turn, impacts employee knowledge sharing. This approach offers valuable insights into the mechanisms at play and highlights the importance of methodological rigor in understanding these dynamics.

In addition to developing a measurement tool, the study offers guidance on best practices for conducting research in this area. The methodological framework established by this study serves as a guide for academics and practitioners interested in exploring the relationships between HRKM, organisational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. By detailing the processes involved in developing and validating the measurement tool, the study provides a practical roadmap for future research efforts. The findings from this study underscore the need for continued methodological development in the field of HRKM and organisational trust. While this study makes significant strides in addressing existing gaps, there is still room for further research to refine measurement tools and methodologies. Future studies could build on this work by exploring additional factors that may influence the relationship between HRKM and organisational trust or by applying the developed tools in different organisational contexts.

Furthermore, the study's emphasis on the Chinese context adds a unique dimension to the methodological implications. By focusing on art design associations in China, the study provides valuable insights into how cultural and contextual factors may shape the relationships between HRKM,

organisational trust, and employee knowledge sharing. This contextual focus highlights the importance of considering local factors when designing and implementing HRKM practices and offers a model that can be adapted and tested in other cultural and organisational settings. Overall, the methodological contributions of this study provide a strong foundation for future research in the field of HRKM and organisational trust. By developing a reliable measurement tool and employing advanced statistical techniques, the study advances our understanding of these relationships and offers practical guidance for both academics and practitioners. The insights gained from this research not only fill a critical gap in the literature but also pave the way for further exploration and refinement of methodologies in this area.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this research offer significant value to both academics and management professionals working within the art design associations in China. This study provides actionable insights into how organisations can effectively manage and leverage their knowledge resources to drive success and enhance organisational performance. Firstly, the research underscores the necessity of aligning HRKM practices with organisational objectives. By establishing HRKM practices that are closely linked to the overarching goals of the organisation, art design associations can foster an environment conducive to knowledge sharing and collaboration among employees. This alignment ensures that employees understand the importance of their contributions to organisational success and encourages active participation in knowledge management initiatives.

Secondly, the study highlights the importance of enhancing a culture of trust within the organisation. The findings indicate that trust serves as a mediator between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing, emphasising the need for organisations to cultivate a supportive and collaborative environment. Practical steps to build trust might include transparent communication, consistent and fair HR policies, and opportunities for employee involvement in decision-making processes. Organisations should prioritise initiatives that strengthen interpersonal relationships and encourage open dialogue among employees,

thereby creating a climate of trust and psychological safety.

Thirdly, the research emphasises the role of leadership in facilitating effective HRKM practices and enhancing a culture of trust and knowledge sharing. Leaders play a vital role in shaping organisational culture and influencing employee behaviour. By modelling trustworthiness, promoting knowledge sharing, and recognising the contributions of employees, leaders can significantly impact the extent to which knowledge is shared within the organisation. Training and development programs should also focus on enhancing leaders' skills in managing knowledge and enhancing trust among team members.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that organisations should invest in training and development initiatives that equip employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to engage in effective knowledge sharing. This could include workshops, mentoring programs, and knowledge-sharing platforms that encourage collaboration and learning among employees. By providing employees with the tools and resources they need to share their knowledge effectively, organisations can enhance the overall quality of knowledge management practices.

Additionally, the study indicates that organisations should leverage technology to support knowledge sharing efforts. Implementing digital platforms and tools that facilitate communication, collaboration, and knowledge exchange can enhance the effectiveness of HRKM practices. Technology can serve as an enabler of knowledge sharing, allowing employees to access information easily, collaborate on projects, and contribute to the collective knowledge of the organisation.

Lastly, the research provides practical implications for policymakers and regulators in the art design sector. By understanding the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing, policymakers can design initiatives and policies that support the development of a robust knowledge economy. This could involve promoting educational programs that emphasise the importance of knowledge management and encouraging organisations to adopt best practices in HRKM.

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the relationship between HRKM and employee knowledge sharing within the context of Chinese art design associations. The findings highlight the importance of trust in mediating this relationship and provide practical recommendations for organisations seeking to enhance their HRKM practices. By aligning HRKM with organisational objectives, enhancing a culture of trust, investing in training and development, leveraging technology, and supporting knowledge sharing initiatives, organisations can create an environment that maximises the potential of their knowledge resources. The empirical contributions and methodological advancements presented in this study lay the groundwork for future research and practical applications, ultimately driving success and innovation in the art design sector and beyond.

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