Key Drivers of Knowledge Management System in Jain Sthanakvasi Sect

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Abstract: *Knowledge Management is an unavoidable task which all the organisations have to do knowingly and unknowingly. In a business organisation knowledge may be a blend of data, information and individual expertise of an employee, but in Jaina knowledge management system , the whole Jain community of Sthanakvasi Sect is treated as an organisation. Knowledge given by the Tirthankaras , systemized by Gandharas is treated as knolwedge asset , these two supreme most authorities of the community are knowledge developers.A comparative analysis of modern and Jaina KM systen has been done by the author. This knowledge asset of shruta gyan (readable knowledge) is divided into thirty two parts : eleven Anga, twelve Upanga, four Mool Sutra, four Chhed Sutra and Avashyaka Sutra. The paper develops the understanding how this treasure of Jaina shruta knowledge has been preserved for the society and communicated to the learners and shared with knowledgeables, also what drivers have affected its preservation and distribution to Jain followers and others.This way analysis of Shruta Gyan is the scope of this study. In this process key drivers in the process of knowledge management system are studied.*

Keywords: Jain Canons,Knowledge, Information, data, knowledge management, knowledge management system, Jain community, Jain scriptures, Jaina knowledge management system, modern knowledge management system, Valabhi Vachna, Mathura Vachna, Pataliputra Vachna.Anga, Jain literature

1. Purpose of the Study

The study proposes to analyse which key drivers work in Jaina Knowledge Management System. An assessment of Jaina knowledge asset has also been made. Specific drivers of knowledge management listed by Awad and Ghaziri are studied in the light of Jaina Knowledge Management system. It has been analysed if Jaina KM fulfils the goal of producing a positive return on investment in people, process and technology and an attempt has been made to study its efforts in the past and present.

2. Research Questions

1. What are the knowledge assets of Jaina Knowledge System?
2. Was some sort of knowledge Management System used by ancient Jain Ascetic teachers to save and spread the knowledge among other memebers of the community?
3. What type of Knowledge Drivers were used in Jaina Knowledge Management System?
4. What is the change that has occured in last 2500 years and how Jain community has faced these change problems in modern environment?

3. Materials and Methods

The study starts with above research questions after literature review on knowledge management from modern management books and journals was done. Jain scriptures and their preservation for last 2500 years brought up the curiosity of analysing the knowledge management system of Jaina scriptures.This way answers to above research questions were found and interpreted with the help of a study of procedure of preservation and distribution of Jain knowledge.

Definition of Knowledge in Jain Philosophy
According to Mohan Lal Mehta, "The Jaina writers have defined knowledge as the essence of soul…..Jaina thinkers always emphasised knowledge to be the chiefe characteristic possessed by soul….Knowledge is divided into five broad categories in Jaina Canons. The conception of five fold knowledge is very old." These five divisions are : 'Mati Gyan, Shruta Gyan, Awadhi Gyan, Manah Paryav Gyan, Kewal Gyan'. In my opinion these five are not divisions, they are five levels of the absolute knowledge, 'Kewal Gyan' being the ultimate level amd 'Mati – Shruta' being the lowest level of knowing by seeing and studying. Focus of this paper is Shruta gyan because that comprises the material part of Jaina Knowledge system, which can be compared with modern conception of materialistic knowledge management.

Knowledge Assests of Jain Sthanakvasi Sect
In Mohan Lal Mehta's words, "The two main Jaina sects, viz., the Swetambara and Digambara, are divided into a number of subsects. There are at present three important Svetambara subsects : Murti poojak, Sthanakvasi and Terapanth." The scope of this study is the knowledge asset of Sthanakvasi subsect of Svetambaras.
Mohan Lal Mehta further states, " The canonical texts are broadly divivded into two groups – Anga PRavishta and Anga Bahya.The authorship of first group is attributed to the Ganadharas (principal disciples) of Mahavira whereas that of the second group is ascribed to different sthaviras(senior perceptors)."

Ancient knowledge assets of Sthanakvasi Sect are divided into four parts:

Eleven Anga – Acharang, Sutrakritangs, Sthanang, Samvayang, Bhagwati, Gyata Dharma Katha, Upasak Dashanga, Antkrit Dashanga, Anuttaraupapaatika, Prashna Vyakarana, Vipak Shruta, (Drishtivada- not available at present).

Twelve Upaanga - Anaupapatika, Rajaprashniya, JIvabhigama, Pragyapana, Suryapragyapti, Chandrapragyapti, Jamboodweep Pragyapti,Nirayavalika, Kalpavatansika,Pushpika, Pushpchulika, Vahnidasha.
Four Mool Sutra – Uttaradhyayan, Dashwaikaalik, Nandi, Anuyog Dwara
Four Chhed Sutra – Vyavahar, Nishith, Dashashrutaskandha, BrihatKalpa
Thirty second Awashyaka Sutra.

4. Modern Jaina Knowledge Assets

All this literature was originally written in Prakrit language, but in modern world, many more books in Hindi, English, Gujarati and Tamil are being authored and published by senior perceptors and learned monks, nuns and Jain followers. All of these have become the scope of this research.

Pundit Dalsukh Malwania has mentioned a few names of Jain scholars who have contributed to modern Jaina knowledge. These names are Pundit SukhLal Ji,Pandit Bechardas ji,Pandit Kailash Chandra Ji,Pandit Mahendra Kumar Ji,Shri Jugmandir Lal Ji,Professor Chakrawarti and Professor Ghoshal and Professor Dr. Upadhyaya. This list was given by him in 1988. Today many more names like Shri Narendra Bhanawat, Sagarmal Jain, etc. have been added to the list. Many magazines and journals have also contributed to Jaina knowledge asset. Many Jain universities and Jain Study centers are being run in private and public sectors of education industry.

The reason behind this vast treasure of knowledge is literacy rate of Jain population. Literacy rate of Jains is the highest in India- 94.1 on an average, for males and females it is 97.4 and 90.6 respectively. This would be wise to assess the contribution of women in Jaina Knowledge Management System , because they have played equal role in the system of Jaina Knowledge management.According to census 2011 data, "The gap of male-female literacy rates is the lowest among Jains which is only 6.8 per cent points against the national gender literacy gap of 21.6 per cent oints."(http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Ad_Campaign/drop_in_articles/04-Distribution_by_Religion.pdf , retrieved on 10/03/2015)

5. What is Knowledge Management

Awad and Ghaziri have compiled a few good definitions of Knowledge Management "Knowledge Management is the process of gathering a firm's collective expertise wherever it resides – in data bases, on paper or in people's heads – and distributing it to where it can help produce the biggest payoff." (Hibbar 1997)

"Knowledge Management is the classification, dissemination, and categorization of information and people throughout an organisation." (Taft 2000)

Knowledge Management is a concious strategy of getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time; it is also helping people share and put information into action in ways that strive to improve organisational performance." (O'Dell et al. 2000)

"Knowledge Management is a framework , a management mind set , that includes building on past experiences, and creating on new vehicles for exchanging knowledge ." (O'Dell et al. 2000)

Knowledge management is a discipline of identifying , capturing, retrieving, sharing and evaluating an enterprise's information assets." (Bair 2001)

6. Use of Knowledge Drivers in Jaina Knowledge Management System

For Jain community several key drivers have worked in the process of knowledge management system that was developed in last 2500 years. According to Awad and Ghaziri "each driver makes a compelling case for Knowledge Management. "Main drivers are

6.1 Technology Drivers

In Lord Mahavir's era the knowledge was verbal only, later with the development of art of writing, the senior preceptors of the community started making notes of His words and discussions with other Jain monks. So initially storage of knowledge was in the brains of the learner only. Gradually writing on 'Tadpatra' became a practice to store the knowledge in Jain community, many a manuscripts are available even today in our museums. We can see that the editor of Tatvartha Sutra who has used many ancient manuscripts from various museums to author a Hindi commentary on the Sutra. Invention of 'paper' and 'pen' was a revolutionary driver to store the knowledge in a compressed form. Instead of hundreds 'Tadpatra' now only a small book or notebook was required. Printing Technology gave a long life to this knowledge and the books became the main source of Jaina knowledge , this pattern continued for a long time, but as Awad and Ghaziri say , "The proliferation of technology, data communications, networking, and wireless transmission has revolutionized the way employees store, communicate and exchange data at high speed." Jain community is also wisely using this driving force to store, communicate and exchange the Jaina knowledge asset.

It was a common practice in Jain community to communicate Jaina knowledge asset to laymen and junior monks through lectures given by senior monks. For the purpose lecture halls were built in the 'sthanaks' or 'upashrayas'. These are the places where monks spend the four months of rainy season and the laymen come to study Jaina knowledge from these monks. In ancient era, in absence of voice amplifiers, the speech was heard only by a few laymen who were sitting near the monk, but in modern 'Upashrayas' loud speakers and sound systems are used to make the invaluable speeches audible to the mass by increasing the range of their listeners. Not only this but storage of these communications also became possible with audio and video technologies of the twenty first century. Today we can hear Jain lectures on Jain philosophy on the internet through various Jain websites or through audio cassettes and CDs. YouTube is dotted with Jain

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'pravachans'(lectures to communicate Jaina knowledge to laymen). This is how the Jaina knowledge is being stored and communicated by Jaina technologists today. Exchange of Jain knowledge with other religious scholars is done through many 'Sarva Dharma Sammelanas' (All religions Summit), while in old times 'Waad wiwaad' was a custom ,which was followed by various communities to prove that their philosophy is the best and correct.

6.2 Personnel Specific and Knowledge Related Drivers

This driver drives knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer within the community. According to Awad and Ghaziri , " This area of KM drivers focuses on the need to create cross functional team of knowledge workers to serve anywhere in the organization ." Personnel specific drivers have played an important role in Jaina knowledge management system because this knowledge asset was transferred from one generation of monks to the next through various tools like remembering, writing, recording etc. Dependence on the qualities of the personnel was very high. This driver has given a variety to the knowledge asset as their background and culture has helped in giving various colors to the same philosophy in terms of language, style and understanding of the 'tatva' (facts) . In recent census this driver has worked strongly and great awareness could be seen amongst the members of Jain community. It is appropriate to quote the website Jainworld.com here,which worked in spreading this awareness amongst the Jain population who was providing the census data for recording in census 2011 "Generally, we have tendency to write the other language as English (as it is an international language) ….However, those who know language such as Prakrit, Sanskrit invariably fail to mention their proficiency in these languages. All our shastras to name a few, Shatkhandagam, Panchastikay, Pravachan saar, Niyam saar etc. are scripted in Prakrit/Sanskrit,Namokar Mantra, Chattari Mangal Dandak, tirthankar stavan, strotra, pujan and many shastrans weather it is Kshat-Khandangam, Panchastikay, Pravachan saar, Niyam saar, Bhagwati Aradhana etc from Digamger sect or Dvadsaang, Upaang, chedhsutra, Prakirnak Sutra etc from Swethamber sect, have been written in Prakrit only. Similarly TatvarthSutra and many tikaas on it, Grammar and many more stotras written in Sanskrit/Apbhransh. This is moral duty of Jains to mention either/all of these languages (Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apbhransh) as the answer to Question No. 11 in the census form to preserve and nurture our culture. Please pass this information to all your relatives, other jains in the vicinity, and friends, and if possible, also get this information published in Jain weekly/fortnightly news magazines, circulate in temples in the form of pamphlet, so that no one misses to give the correct information. Please ensure that you give all the information correct, as you will get another chance to provide information only after 10 years."(http://www.jainworld.com/society/jainevents/GJE2011/Census2011AndJains_English.pdf, retrieved on 10/03/2015)
This excerpt is a live example of how Jain knowledge is being communicated and shared with others through recent channels of this driver.

6.3 Financial Drivers

In the ancient era kings and elite class of the Jaina society contributed a lot of support and money in preservation, communication and exchange of knowledge. They used to provide finances for the knowledge management of Jain community. Jains faced a tough time when Jain kings became weak and lost their dignity. In present scenario, Jain community is a rich community of the economy, almost zero percent population of the community belongs to lowest class of the economy. The community has the capacity to preserve the heritage of Jain knowledge asset that has been transferred to it for last many generations. But somehow religious restrictions on the 'Sangha'(division) which is possessing this precious asset has no finance within his control because they are the practitioners of non possessiveness and they depend on the services of the community only. This has also acted as a hindrance as well as a support.

6.4 Process Drivers

According to Awad and Ghaziri, "To improve work processes elimination of duplicate mistakes by learning from past and by transferring the best experiential knowledge from one location or project in the firm to another." The author has tried to draw a comparison between this modern definition of process drivers and the efforts of Jain community to save their knowledge through various processes. Three major summits become an integral part of these historical efforts of saving the Jain knowledge assets for future generations. We can list the efforts of Sthanakvasi Sect into three main steps:

a) The first Pataliputra (Patna) Council : This council was held after 160 years of the liberation of Lord Mahavira in Pataliputra.Before this council the ancient tradition of twelve Angas was in practice and these twelve were taught by senior perceptors to juniors individually in their groups called ' Singhara'. Unfortunately in this summit it was exposed that not even a single present monk remembered the twelfth Anga – Drishtivada. The only monk Bhadrabahu remembered this Anga was not present in the Summit , hence no recording of this Sutra could be done. Technology drivers were the main cause behind this loss of Jaina Knolwedge asset because the Anga knowledge was not recorded in written form, memory of the monks was the only tool to record and preserve this valuable asset. Some scholars opine that this loss occurred due to ban on forwarding this knowledge to less learned disciples and most of them disqualified the dificult tests of getting this knowledge from their Gurus. Then there were restrictions on specific knowledge to be given to the laymen, such Sutras were taught to monks and nuns only. Hence the number of learners was very less for these scriptures.

For the rest of eleven Angas, whatever these monks remembered, was compiled in the form of verses and texts and efforts were made to record them for future generation.

In ancient times, there were strict instructions to all the disciples not to use any written notes of this knowledge, hence the loss could not be stopped.

b) Second - Mathura Council headed by Acharya Skandila and Valabhi Council headed by Nagarjuna Suri : After Lord Mahavira's liberation's 825 years two simultaneou councils were held at two different places- Mathura and Valabhi. This shows enthusiasm of senior perceptors Acharya Skandila and NAgarjuna Sri ,to preserve the Jaina knolwedge asset.

c) Third Valabhi Council headed by Devardhigana Kshamashraman : This council was held approximately after 980 years after Lord Mahavira's liberation at Valabhi.

7. Conclusion

The author has listed the Jaina knowledge asset and analysed the keydrivers Jaina management system in this research. It can be concluded that the Jain community has made great efforts to make critical knowledge available at the time it is needed to monks and laymen in current scenario, though historical scenario was different. They have also found mechanisms to expedite available knowledge for immediate use in soul upgradation.They have also learnt the more knowledge is used ,the more value it provides. Further scope of the study can be to study the relationship between the two sangha (monks and laymen) is to be analysed as the two elements using the same knowledge assets.The author has touched this point in the end of the paper but thorough research work is required to develop a separate paper .

8. Limitations of the Study

1) All the members of Jain Community have been treated as members of an organisation In fact the coomunity is treated as an organisation.

2) Though DIgambara sect holds a different view on Jaina knolwedge assets and believes that all the knowledge was lost after 683 years of Mahavira;s liberation and the Sutras , Shvetamabaras believe in are not the true words of Lord Mahavira.

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