

EMPATHY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOUR AMONG EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT This paper examines the phenomenon of knowledge sharing behaviour among employees in organizations and investigates the role of empathy in this context. By analyzing data from 200 employees, we found that empathy does not have a direct and strong influence on knowledge sharing behaviour, neither in terms of knowledge giving nor knowledge asking. However, through prosocial behaviour, empathy indirectly influences these behaviours.

Additionally, we assessed whether empathy influences motivation in terms of knowledge giving and knowledge asking behaviours. Our analysis shows that empathy has no evident impact on motivation, and motivation has no evident effect on employee behaviour when it comes to asking or providing information within businesses.

KEYWORDS: *Empathy, Knowledge Sharing Behaviour, Prosocial Behaviour, Motivation, Employees, Organizations.*

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INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic business landscape, effective management goes beyond just technical skills and knowledge (Hitt et al., 1998). Modern managers and employees require a blend of cognitive abilities, emotional intelligence, and a sense of purpose, often referred to as Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ) (Drigas & Papoutsis, 2018). IQ is the 'what' of intelligence (raw cognitive ability), EQ is the 'how' of intelligence (managing emotions) (Goleman, 1996) and empathy is a thread that weaves through both (Stein & Book, 2011). The study of empathy is notably disorganized due to its diversity and lack of consistency across different fields (Konig et al., 2020). Different definitions, measurement tools, theoretical frameworks, and applications contribute to a fragmented understanding of the concept (Biringen et al., 2014). The gap in the previous research highlights the need for more interdisciplinary communication and collaboration to develop a more unified and comprehensive understanding of empathy which could address these inconsistencies and enhance the validity and applicability of empathy research across various fields.

Empathy is a complex concept whose definition and application differ between psychology and management studies, reflecting the distinct goals and frameworks of each field (Cuff et al., 2016). In psychology, empathy is considered the ability to recognize, understand and share the thoughts and feelings of another person. It is commonly divided into two components: cognitive empathy (understanding another's perspective) and affective empathy (sharing another's emotional state) (Maibom, 2014). Psychologists study empathy to examine its role in mental health, interpersonal relationships, moral development, and social Behaviour, the focus is more on its neural and psychological means (Decety, 2011). In management studies, empathy is considered a critical leadership and organizational skill necessary for communication, conflict resolution, team building, and customer relations (Holt & Marques, 2012). In management, empathy can be divided into two categories: interpersonal empathy (understanding and relating to the emotions of others) and organizational empathy (addressing the needs of stakeholders) (Walther et al., 2017). Management emphasizes empathy as a tool for increasing organizational performance, employee engagement, and customer satisfaction (Sadri et al, 2011).

The key differences between psychology and management studies from an empathy standpoint are focus, components, and objectives. Psychology concentrates on the internal experience and development of empathy, while management applies empathy practically to improve workplace dynamics and orga-

nizational outcomes (Gladstein, 1983). The reviewed literature suggests a compelling link between empathy and knowledge-sharing Behaviour, which in turn influences performance within an enterprise (Ma & Chan, 2014; Wang & Hou, 2015; Sedighi et al., 2016; Carrera et al., 2018; Suwanti, 2019). Organizations that cultivate empathy among employees are more likely to create a positive, collaborative culture through prosocial behaviour that fosters knowledge exchange, encourages innovation, and enhances overall performance (Obrenovic et al, 2020).

The purpose of the proposed study is to clarify how empathy is defined in business and management studies and to explore the possible measurement approaches (Chlopan et al., 1985), while examining its influence on collaboration leading and knowledge-sharing Behaviour, with mediating factors such as prosocial Behaviour and motivation.

EMPATHY AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOUR

Empathy and its Influence within Organizations

The early research in the field of empathy, focused on organization and management was done by Reuven Bar-On, who proposed a model of Emotional Intelligence (Bar-On, 2006). In Bar-On's model of emotional intelligence, empathy holds significant importance as it is one of the key components under the interpersonal skills category (Palmer et al., 2003). Bar-On's model focuses on a wide range of emotional and social competencies, including intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management, and general mood (Boyatzis, 2009). Bar-On's model emphasizes the importance of understanding and managing emotions in oneself and in others to improve personal and professional relationships (Dries & Pepermans, 2007). Reuven Bar On's model was more academic in nature, and his work was further carried out by Mayer and Salovey, Daniel Goleman, Travis Bradberry, and Jean Greaves. Mayer and Salovey's four-branch model (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sternberg, 2000) break emotional intelligence down into four components: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions, and managing emotions (Bru-Luna et al., 2021). Daniel Goleman's mixed model emphasizes five key components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy, and motivation (Goleman, 1998). Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves' Emotional Intelligence model highlights four main skills of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Bradberry

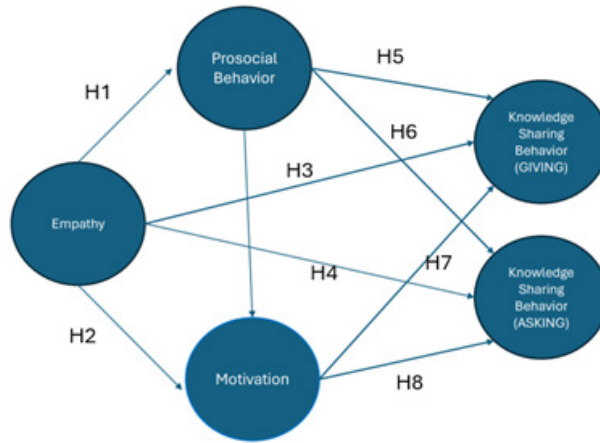


FIGURE 1
SOURCE: Developed by Author

& Greaves, 2009). All of the above studies contributed to a better understanding of emotional intelligence, which ultimately led to a broader definition of empathy in the organizational context.

Knowledge Sharing within Organizations

Knowledge sharing is critical to organizational success, as it fosters collaboration and improves decision-making processes (Park & Kim, 2018). It refers to the exchange of information, skills, insights, and expertise among employees, teams, departments, or organizations (Jafari Navimipour & Charband, 2016). Research suggests that empathy plays a key role in shaping individuals’ willingness to share knowledge within organizations (Muller et al., 2014). Empathetic leaders create a supportive environment that fosters open communication and trust among colleagues, thereby enabling knowledge sharing within the organization (Slater, 2008). Empathy also strengthens social bonds, fostering a culture where employees feel understood and valued, thereby motivating them to willingly share their knowledge (Men & Yue, 2019). Several studies highlight the positive correlation between empathy and knowledge sharing behaviour, emphasizing the role of empathetic communication, active listening, and emotional intelligence in creating an organizational culture conducive to knowledge sharing (Obrenovic et al., 2022).

Empathy fosters altruism and concern for others, supporting intrinsic motivation to share knowledge. Social Exchange Theory contextualizes knowledge sharing as motivated by reciprocal social benefits, with

empathy strengthening trust and social bonds facilitating exchange (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1980) elucidates how empathy shapes cognitive and social factors (attitudes, norms, control perceptions) that drive intentions and actual knowledge sharing (Nguyen et al., 2019; Dehsorkhi & Hayat, 2025).

Toward the Research Hypothesis

Direct Influence of Empathy on Prosocial Behaviour, Motivation and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (i.e. Knowledge Giving and Knowledge Asking)

H1: Empathy Has a Positive Relationship with Prosocial Behaviour

Prosocial behaviour is considered as an essential link between empathy and knowledge sharing behaviour. If employees have prosocial tendencies, such as helping colleagues or sharing information they create, then it forms an environment which is conducive for knowledge exchange. The mediating role of prosocial behaviour has been supported by a number of studies (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2004).

H2: Empathy Has a Positive Relationship with Motivation.

The relationship between empathy and motivation focuses on importance of emotional intelligence in cultivating caring and collaborative environments. Previous studies indicate that empathy can motivate

individuals to behave in a way that could be beneficial to others. This also supports studies which indicate that altruistic motivation is rooted in empathy, and it strongly influences sharing knowledge (Davenport & Prusak, 1998).

H3: Empathy Has a Positive Relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)

H4: Empathy Has a Positive Relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking)

Empathy significantly enhances behaviour of knowledge sharing, specifically in terms of knowledge giving, and with empathy, one's ability to comprehend and relate the feelings of another also gets expanded. Building supportive relationships and relating effectively to others is more likely among individuals who share ideas, information or knowledge voluntarily, without expecting anything in return (Wang & Noe, 2010). Empathy enables individuals to feel comfortable seeking information and understanding whether they can adopt another person's perspective regarding the insights that person holds. This, in turn, increases opportunities for collaboration and learning (Stephan & Finlay, 1999).

Direct Influence of Prosocial Behaviour on Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (i.e. Knowledge Giving and Knowledge Asking)

H5: Prosocial Behaviour Has a Positive Relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)

H6: Prosocial Behaviour Has a Positive Relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking)

Prosocial Behaviour refers to voluntary actions performed to benefit others, including sharing, helping, and providing emotional support. Individuals who engage in prosocial Behaviour are more likely to exhibit positive knowledge-sharing attitudes, as they willingly offer their knowledge and expertise to assist others (King & Marks Jr., 2008). This connection facilitates employee collaboration and helps create a supportive culture within teams and organizations.

Even in the context of seeking knowledge, prosocial Behaviour is positively associated with knowledge-sharing Behaviour. This concept involves seeking assistance from others to understand an issue or to bridge a knowledge gap. Individuals who display prosocial Behaviour are more likely to ask others for help or knowledge, as they recognize the importance of collaboration and mutual support (Mustika et al., 2022). Such interactions lead to richer exchanges of knowledge and ideas, thereby enhancing team dynamics and overall performance (Papachristopoulos et al., 2023).

Direct Influence of Motivation on Knowledge

Sharing Behaviour (i.e. Knowledge Giving and Knowledge Asking)

H7: Motivation Has a Positive Relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)

H8: Motivation Has a Positive Relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking)

Motivation has a positive relationship with knowledge-sharing Behaviour, particularly in the context of knowledge giving (Susanty et al., 2016). Motivation refers to the internal and external factors that stimulate individuals' desire, energy, and commitment to a task or goal. Knowledge-giving Behaviour (giving) involves the voluntary provision of knowledge, insights, or expertise to others without expecting anything in return. Highly motivated employees are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing by offering advice and appropriate assistance to colleagues (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Both intrinsic motivators, such as personal satisfaction, and extrinsic motivators, such as recognition or rewards, can foster cultures of generosity and cooperation.

Motivation is positively associated with knowledge-sharing Behaviour (asking) in the form of knowledge seeking, such as requesting information or advice from others. This Behaviour involves actively seeking knowledge, guidance, or assistance to enhance understanding or bridge knowledge gaps. Motivated individuals are more likely to feel encouraged to ask for help or information, as such actions support personal growth and effective performance (Wasko & Faraj, 2000). Their desire for learning and improvement drives them to leverage others' knowledge.

Influence of Prosocial Behaviour as Mediator between Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (i.e. Knowledge Giving and Asking)

H9: Prosocial Behaviour as a Mediator Has a Significant Influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)

H10: Prosocial Behaviour as a Mediator Has a Significant Influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking)

The relationship between empathy, prosocial Behaviour, and knowledge sharing has received significant attention in psychological and organizational research. This study examines how prosocial Behaviour mediates the relationship between empathy and employees' knowledge-sharing Behaviour.

As empathy is defined as the ability to understand others' emotions and feelings, it can positively influence prosocial Behaviour. Prior studies suggest that individuals with higher levels of empathy are more likely

to exhibit prosocial Behaviours such as helping, sharing, and cooperating (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1990; Batson, Fultz, & Schoenrade, 1987). For example, a study of teenagers found that empathy significantly influenced prosocial Behaviour through perceived social support (Li et al., 2025). This indicates that empathy not only motivates individuals to engage in prosocial actions but also enhances perceptions of social support, thereby further encouraging prosocial Behaviour.

Influence of Motivation as Mediator between Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (i.e Knowledge Giving and Asking)

H11: Motivation as a Mediator Has a Significant Influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)

H12: Motivation as a Mediator Has a Significant Influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking)

Motivation is an important driver of knowledge-sharing Behaviour, whether through giving or seeking knowledge. As noted earlier, social exchange theory suggests that individuals are more likely to share knowledge when they perceive the benefits of sharing to outweigh the associated costs (Zhang & Liu, 2022). Empathy can enhance motivation by fostering a supportive environment in which employees feel valued and appreciated for their contributions. Motivational factors may be intrinsic or extrinsic: intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for inherent satisfaction, whereas extrinsic motivation involves rewards or recognition provided by external agents (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Empathy can strengthen intrinsic motivation by promoting a sense of belonging and community among employees, thereby encouraging knowledge-sharing Behaviour. Although positive relationships have been identified, it remains challenging to determine how different dimensions of motivation interact with empathy to influence knowledge sharing. Some studies indicate that not all forms of motivation are equally effective; for instance, extrinsic rewards may undermine intrinsic motivation in certain contexts (Deci et al., 1999). In summary, motivation serves as a crucial mediator between empathy and knowledge-sharing Behaviour.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Analysis

This research is based on micro-level data collected as part of the MAIA project (Models and Methods for an Active Ageing Workforce: An International Academy),

a Research and Innovation Staff Exchange funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. The project develops an international academy comprising 14 academic partners, including seven European universities and seven universities from third countries. For the analysis, 200 usable responses were obtained through an online questionnaire administered via the platform www.ika.si.

Operationalization and Measure Validation

In this study, the independent and dependent variables were measured using validated scales (see Table 1). Scale development and validation were conducted using jamovi (version 2.3.26). An initial pool of more than eighty potential items was generated through a literature review, expert interviews, and related sources. Following expert deliberations, more than forty items were eliminated. Subsequently, reliability analysis was conducted, and twenty items with Cronbach's α values above 0.70 were retained for further analysis.

Discriminant and convergent validity were assessed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (Floyd & Widaman, 1995). Exploratory factor analysis, reliability analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis were conducted using jamovi (version 2.3.26). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity indicated that the correlation matrix was significantly different from an identity matrix, confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis ($\chi^2 = 1925$, $df = 190$, $p < .001$). Sampling adequacy was assessed using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure, with all values exceeding 0.80, indicating that the data were appropriate for factor analysis.

All variables were measured using multiple items on a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Empathy, prosocial Behaviour, motivation, knowledge-sharing Behaviour (giving), and knowledge-sharing Behaviour (asking) were measured using the following statements:

Independent and Dependent variables – Prosocial Behaviour, Motivation Knowledge Sharing Giving Behaviour, Knowledge Sharing Asking Behaviour

All proposed hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) with LISREL (version 12). Model fit was evaluated using multiple fit indices, including the normed fit index (NFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Values of NFI, NNFI, CFI, and GFI equal to or greater than 0.90 indicate good model fit (Hair et al., 1998; Byrne, 2006), while RMSEA and SRMR values equal to or less than 0.08 indicate acceptable model fit

TABLE 1. Measures

Empathy
EMPI - I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset
EMP2 - I tend to get emotionally involved with a friend's or colleague's problems
EMP3 - If I see someone going through a difficult time, I try to be caring toward that person
EMP4 - I like to be there for others in times of difficulty
Motivation
MOT1 - My manager shows interest in my personal development
MOT2 - I am likely to recommend my organization as a place to work
MOT3 - The recognition I receive from my direct manager/lead/coworkers motivates me to do my best
MOT4 - My company's motivation program is best
Prosocial Behaviour
PROS1- I am considerate of my colleague's feelings
PROS2 - I easily share with friends any good opportunity that comes to me
PROS3 - I take the opportunity to praise the work of other colleagues
PROS4 - I do what I can to help others avoid getting into trouble
Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)
GIVE1 - I give my ideas at work (not retained)
GIVE2 - I contribute task information to colleagues
GIVE3 - I demonstrate techniques that I know to colleagues
GIVE 4- I give work-related advice to colleagues
Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking)
ASK1- I ask colleagues to teach me their expertise
ASK2 - I ask for the insight of my colleagues
ASK3 - I ask colleagues for work-related information
ASK4 - I request advice from my colleagues based on what they know

SOURCE: Developed by Author

(Browne & Cudeck, 1992; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The chi-square statistic is reported but not emphasized, as it is highly sensitive to sample size and model complexity (Bentler & Bonett, 1980).

STRUCTURED EQUATIONS

Influence of Prosocial Behaviour and Empathy on Motivation

$$\text{Motivation} = 0.359 * \text{Prosocial Behaviour} + 0.0980 * \text{Empathy}, \text{Errorvar.} = 0.658, R^2 = 0.052$$

90% CILL	(0.0361;	(- 0.211;	(0.521;
90% CIUL	0.683)	0.407)	0.830)
Standerr	-0.197	-0.188	-0.0931
z-value	1.829	0.522	7.067
P-value	0.067	0.522	0.000

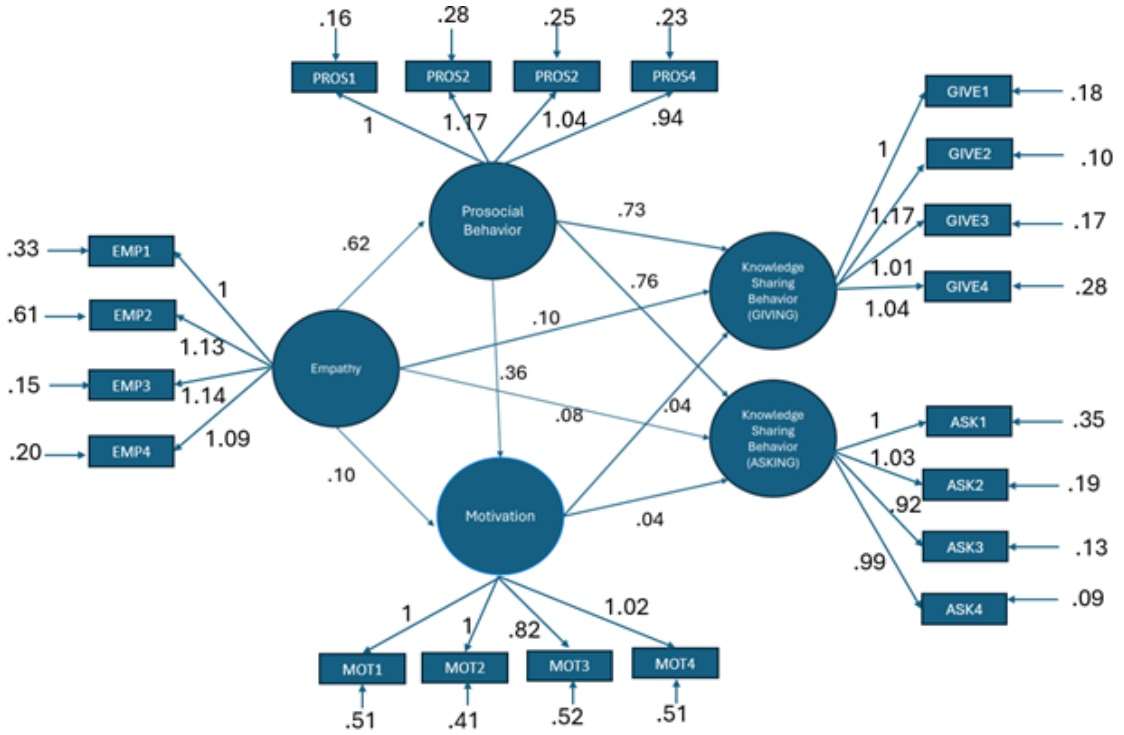


FIGURE 2. Structured Equation Model
 SOURCE : Developed By Author

This equation represents the structural relationship between Motivation and its predictors, namely Prosocial Behaviour and Empathy. The R^2 value of 0.052 indicates limited explanatory power, with only 5.2% of the variance in Motivation explained by Prosocial Behaviour and Empathy. The coefficient for Prosocial Behaviour is 0.359, suggesting that a one-unit increase in Prosocial Behaviour is associated with a 0.359-unit increase in Motivation. This effect is marginally significant, with a 90% confidence interval of [0.036, 0.683], a standard error of 0.197, a z-value of 1.829, and a p-value of 0.067. In contrast, the coefficient for Empathy is 0.098, indicating that a one-unit increase in Empathy is associated with a 0.098-unit increase in Motivation; however, this effect is not statistically significant (90% CI = [-0.211, 0.407], SE = 0.188, z = 0.522, p = 0.602). The error variance for Motivation is 0.658, indicating that a substantial proportion of variance remains unexplained by the model.

Influence of Empathy on Prosocial Social Behaviour

Prosocial Behaviour = 0.624 * Empathy, Errorvar. = 0.114, $R^2 = 0.415$

90% CILL	(0.-487;	-0.0836
90% CIUL	0.762)	0.150)
Standerr	-0.0867	-0.019
z-value	7.469	5.992
P-value	0.000	0.000

This equation represents the structural relationship between Prosocial Behaviour and its predictor, Empathy. The R^2 value of 0.415 indicates that 41.5% of the variance in Prosocial Behaviour is explained by Empathy. The coefficient for Empathy is 0.624, suggesting that a one-unit increase in empathy is associated with a 0.624-unit increase in prosocial Behaviour. This effect is statistically significant, with a 90% confidence interval of [0.487, 0.762], a standard error of 0.0867, a z-value of 7.469, and a p-value < .001. The error vari-

ance for Prosocial Behaviour is 0.114, indicating that most of the variance in prosocial Behaviour is accounted for by Empathy, with relatively little unexplained variance.

Influence of Motivation, Prosocial Behaviour and Empathy on Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)

Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving)=
 0.0415*Motivation + 0.732*Prosocial Behaviour +
 0.105*Empathy, Errorvar. = 0.0865, R²=0.60

90% CILL	(-0.009;	(0.565;	(-0.031;	(0.0650;
90% CIUL	0.0916)	0.898)	0.240)	0.115)
Standerr	-0.0305	-0.101	-0.0822	-0.015
z-value	1.36	7.212	1.273	5.762
P-value	0.174	0.000	0.203	0.000

This equation represents the structural relationship between Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (giving) and its predictors: Motivation, Prosocial Behaviour, and Empathy. The R² value of 0.60 indicates that 60% of the variance in Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (giving) is explained by these three predictors. The coefficient for motivation is 0.0415, suggesting that a one-unit increase in Motivation is associated with a 0.0415-unit increase in Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (giving); however, this effect is not statistically significant (90% CI = [-0.009, 0.092], SE = 0.0305, z = 1.360, p = 0.174). Prosocial Behaviour exhibits a strong and statistically significant positive effect, with a coefficient of 0.732 (90% CI = [0.565, 0.898], SE = 0.101, z = 7.212, p < .001). In contrast, the coefficient for Empathy is 0.105, indicating a small and non-significant effect (90% CI = [-0.031, 0.240], SE = 0.0822, z = 1.273, p = 0.203). The error variance for Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (giving) is 0.0865, suggesting that the majority of variance in this outcome is accounted for by the model.

Influence of Motivation, Prosocial Behaviour and Empathy on Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking)

Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking) =0.0415*Motivation + 0.757*Prosocial Behaviour+ 0.0838*Empathy, Errorvar. = 0.143, R²=0.48

90% CILL	(-0.018;	(0.561;	(-0.076;	(0.107;
90% CIUL	0.101)	0.953)	0.244)	0.192)
Standerr	-0.0362	-0.119	-0.0971	-0.0253
Z-value	1.145	6.349	0.862	5.670
P-value	0.252	0.000	0.389	0.000

This equation represents the structural relationship between Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (asking) and its predictors: Motivation, Prosocial Behaviour, and Empathy. The R² value of 0.48 indicates that 48% of the variance in Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (asking) is explained by these three predictors. The coefficient for Motivation is 0.0415, indicating that a one-unit increase in Motivation is associated with a 0.0415-unit increase in Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (asking); however, this effect is not statistically significant (90% CI = [-0.018, 0.101], SE = 0.0362, z = 1.145, p = 0.252). Prosocial Behaviour demonstrates a strong and statistically significant positive effect, with a coefficient of 0.757 (90% CI = [0.561, 0.953], SE = 0.119, z = 6.349, p < .001). In contrast, Empathy shows a small and non-significant effect, with a coefficient of 0.0838 (90% CI = [-0.076, 0.244], SE = 0.0971, z = 0.862, p = 0.389). The error variance for Knowledge-sharing Behaviour (asking) is 0.143, indicating that a substantial proportion of variance in this outcome is explained by the model.

The goodness-of-fit statistics reported above provide a comprehensive assessment of how well the specified structural equation model (SEM) fits the observed data. The following paragraphs discuss each fit index in detail.

Degrees of Freedom (DF)

This reflects the number of independent observations minus the number of parameters estimated in the model. A value of 161 indicates that the model is over-identified, allowing its overall fit to be evaluated.

Maximum Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square (χ²)

This measures the discrepancy between the observed and expected covariance matrices. A smaller χ² value and associated p-value (which is essentially zero here) indicate a better fit. The value of 275.998 with a p-value of 0.00000 suggests that there is a significant difference between the model-implied and observed covariance matrices.

Browne’s ADF Chi-Square

This is an alternative measure of model fit. Similar to the maximum likelihood ratio chi-square, lower values indicate a better fit. The value of 275.716 with a p-value of 0.00000 supports the conclusion of a good fit.

Estimated Non-centrality Parameter (NCP)

This indicates the degree of departure from the null hypothesis. A higher value suggests a poorer fit, but the 90 percent confidence interval suggests some variability in this estimate.

Minimum Fit Function Value

A smaller value indicates a better fit. The value of 0.923

TABLE 2: Goodness of fit statistics of structured equation model

Degrees of Freedom for (C1) -(C2)	161
Maximum Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square (C1)	275.998 (P = 0.00000)
Browne’s (1984) ADF Chi-Square (C2 NT)	275.716(P = 0.00000)
Estimated Non-centrality Parameter (NCP)	114.998
90 Percent Confidence Interval for NCP	(72.892; 164.977)
Minimum Fit Function Value	0.923
Population Discrepancy Function Value (FO)	0.385
90 Percent Confidence Interval for FO	(0.244; 0.552)
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.0489
90 Percent Confidence Interval for RMSEA	(0.0389; 0.0585)
P-Value for Test of Close Fit (RMSEA < 0.05)	0.563
Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI)	1.251
90 Percent Confidence Interval for ECVI	(1.110; 1.418)
ECVI for Saturated Model	1.405
ECVI for Independence Model	9.638
Chi-Square for Independence Model (190 df)	2841.880
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.903
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)	0.949
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.765
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.957
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.957
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.885
Critical N (CN)	223.808
Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)	0.0309
Standardized RMR	0.0396
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.916
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.890
Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI)	0.702

SOURCE: Developed By Author

suggests a relatively good fit.

Population Discrepancy Function Value (FO)

Similar to the minimum fit function value, a smaller value indicates a better fit. The value of 0.385 suggests a relatively good fit.

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)

This assesses the discrepancy between the fitted model and the population covariance matrix, considering model complexity and sample size. Values closer to

0.05 or less indicate a good fit. The value of 0.0489 with a 90 percent confidence interval (0.0389, 0.0585) suggests a good fit.

P-Value for Test of Close Fit (RMSEA < 0.05)

A p-value greater than 0.05 suggests that the model fits the data well. The value of 0.563 indicates an acceptable fit.

Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI)

This is a measure of predictive fit, with lower values indicating better predictive performance. The value of 1.251 suggests reasonable predictive fit.

Fit Indices (NFI, NNFI, PNFI, CFI, IFI, RFI)

These indices compare the fit of the specified model to the fit of baseline models. Values closer to 1 indicate better fit. Overall, these indices (ranging from 0.885 to 0.957) suggest a good fit.

Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) and Standardized RMR

These indices assess lack of fit per residual, with smaller values indicating better fit. Both values are relatively low, suggesting a good fit.

Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)

These indices range from 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 indicating better fit. The values of 0.916 and 0.890, respectively, suggest a relatively good fit.

Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI)

This index considers model parsimony, with values closer to 1 indicating better fit. The value of 0.702 suggests reasonable parsimony.

Overall, based on these goodness-of-fit statistics, the SEM appears to provide a relatively good fit to the observed data.

Control variable – Region, Gender, Qualification, Designation, Age

Region as a control variable was included in the model and operationalized as a dichotomous variable, where "0" corresponds to "India" and "1" corresponds to "Outside India (Europe, United States of America)". Gender, where "0" corresponds to "Male" and "1" corresponds to "Female". Qualification where "0" corresponds to Bachelor, "1" corresponds to Masters, "2" corresponds to PhD and "3" corresponds to others. Age, where "0" corresponds to "30-39", "1" corresponds to "40-49", "2" corresponds to "50-59" and "3" corresponds to "60 and Above".

FINDINGS

Model fit was assessed using multiple indices, including the normed fit index (NFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Values of NFI, NNFI, CFI, and GFI equal to or greater than 0.90 indicate good model fit (Byrne, 2001). RMSEA and SRMR values equal to or less than 0.08 indicate acceptable model fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1992). The chi-square statistic is reported but not emphasized, as it is highly sensitive to sample size and model complexity (Bentler & Bonett, 1980).

Based on the structural equation (Motivation = $0.359 \times \text{Prosocial Behaviour} + 0.098 \times \text{Empathy}$; Error variance = 0.658; $R^2 = 0.052$), Prosocial behaviour shows a marginally significant positive association with Motivation, whereas the relationship between Empathy and Motivation is not statistically significant. The R^2 value indicates that Prosocial behaviour and Empathy together explain only a small proportion of the variance in Motivation. Accordingly, these findings should be interpreted with caution, given the marginal significance of the Prosocial behaviour effect, the non-significant effect of Empathy, and the relatively low explanatory power of the model. Further model refinement or the inclusion of additional predictors may be warranted.

The structural equation (Prosocial Behaviour = $0.624 \times \text{Empathy}$; Error variance = 0.114; $R^2 = 0.415$) indicates a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between Empathy and Prosocial behaviour, as reflected by the high z-value and low p-value. The relatively high R^2 value further suggests that Empathy explains a substantial proportion of the variance in Prosocial behaviour. Accordingly, Empathy emerges as a significant predictor of Prosocial behaviour within the structural equation model.

The structural equation (Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving) = $0.0415 \times \text{Motivation} + 0.732 \times \text{Prosocial Behaviour} + 0.105 \times \text{Empathy}$, Errorvar. = 0.0865, $R^2 = 0.60$) indicates positive relationships between Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving) and its predictors (Motivation, Prosocial Behaviour, and Empathy), as evidenced by the low p-values and high Z-values for the coefficients of Prosocial Behaviour and Empathy. However, the coefficient of Motivation does not reach statistical significance based on the provided p-value. The relatively high R^2 value indicates that a substantial proportion of the variance in Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving) is explained by Motivation, Prosocial Behaviour, and Empathy. Therefore, based on this analysis, Prosocial Behaviour and Empathy appear to be significant predictors of Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving) in the structured equation model, while the significance of motivation may need further investigation.

The structural equation (Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking) = $0.0415 \times \text{Motivation} + 0.757 \times \text{Prosocial Behaviour} + 0.0838 \times \text{Empathy}$, Errorvar. = 0.143, $R^2 = 0.48$) suggests a significant positive relationship between Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking) and its predictor Prosocial Behaviour, as evidenced by the low p-value and high Z-value for its coefficient. However, the coefficients for Motivation and Empathy do not reach statistical significance based on the provided p-values. The R^2 value indicates that a substantial proportion of the variance in Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking) is explained by the model. Therefore,

based on this analysis, Prosocial Behaviour emerges as a significant predictor of Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking), whereas the roles of Motivation and Empathy may require further investigation.

RESULTS OF HYPOTHESES TESTING

Hypothesis H1 proposed that Empathy has a positive relationship with Prosocial Behaviour. Results indicate a positive and significant effect with coefficient of .624 ($z = 7.469, p < .001$), therefore H1 was supported.

Hypothesis H2 proposed that Empathy has a positive relationship with Motivation. Results indicate a positive but not significant effect with coefficient of .098, ($z = 0.522, p = .522$), therefore, H2 was not supported.

Hypothesis H3 proposed that Empathy has a positive relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving). Results indicate a positive but not significant effect with coefficient of .105 ($z = 1.273, p = .203$), therefore, H3 was not supported.

Hypothesis H4 proposed that Empathy has a positive relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking). Results indicate a positive but not significant effect with coefficient of .084 ($z = .862, p = .389$), therefore, H4 was not supported.

Hypothesis H5 proposed that Prosocial Behaviour has a positive relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving). Results indicate a positive and strong significant effect with coefficient of .732 ($z = 7.212, p < .001$), therefore H5 was supported.

Hypothesis H6 proposed that Prosocial Behaviour has a positive relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking). Results indicate a positive and strong significant effect with coefficient of .757 ($z = 6.349, p < .001$), therefore H6 was supported.

Hypothesis H7 proposed that Motivation has a positive relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving). Results indicate a positive but not significant effect with coefficient of .0415 ($z = 1.360, p = .174$), therefore, H7 was not supported.

Hypothesis H8 proposed that Motivation has a positive relationship with Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking). Results indicate a positive but not significant effect with coefficient of .0415 ($z = 1.145, p = .252$), therefore H8 was not supported.

Hypothesis H9 proposed that Prosocial Behaviour as a mediator has a significant influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving). Empathy significantly predicted Prosocial Behaviour with a coefficient of .624 ($z = 7.469, p < .001$), which in turn significantly predicted Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving) with a coefficient .732 ($z = 7.212, p < .001$), indicating a significant mediation effect.

Hypothesis H10 proposed that Prosocial Behaviour as a mediator has a significant influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking). Empathy significantly predicted Prosocial Behaviour with a coefficient of .624 ($z = 7.469, p < .001$), which in turn significantly predicted Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking) with a coefficient .757 ($z = 3.49, p < .001$), indicating a significant mediation effect.

Hypothesis H11 Proposed that Motivation as a mediator has a significant influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving). Empathy did not significantly predict Motivation with a coefficient of .098 ($z = 0.522, p = .522$), and Motivation did not significantly predict Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Giving) with a coefficient of .042 ($z = 1.360, p = .174$), indicating the absence of a mediation effect.

Hypothesis H12 Proposed that Motivation as a mediator has a significant influence on Empathy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking). Empathy did not significantly predict Motivation with a coefficient of .098 ($z = 0.522, p = .522$), and Motivation did not significantly predict Knowledge Sharing Behaviour (Asking) with a coefficient of .042 ($z = 1.145, p = .252$), indicating the absence of a mediation effect.

The results indicate that leaders who foster a culture of learning and technological openness drive stronger transformation outcomes. This aligns with prior findings that resilience and adaptability are critical in uncertain markets (Upenieks, 2003).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study opens new avenues for discussion regarding the influence of empathy on knowledge-sharing behaviour within organizations. The findings reveal a complex relationship between empathy and knowledge sharing. Although empathy is commonly regarded as a key driver of cooperative and supportive behaviour, the direct effect of empathy on knowledge-sharing behaviour among employees was found to be relatively weak. This suggests that empathetic feelings alone may not be sufficient to significantly increase employees' willingness to share knowledge.

However, the study identifies an indirect pathway through which empathy influences knowledge-sharing behaviour, namely via prosocial behaviour. In organizational contexts, empathetic employees are more likely to engage in prosocial behaviours—actions that benefit others and contribute positively to the group. In this study, prosocial behaviour functions as a mediator between empathy and knowledge-sharing behaviour. The findings indicate that empathy facilitates prosocial behaviour, and empathetic employees are therefore more likely to exhibit such behaviours, thereby creat-

ing conditions that are more conducive to knowledge sharing. The strong indirect influence of empathy on knowledge sharing through prosocial behaviour highlights the potential for increased collaboration and knowledge exchange through the promotion of an empathetic culture within organizations or organizational communities.

This indirect relationship highlights the importance of empathetic interaction as a strategy for fostering knowledge sharing, including both knowledge giving and knowledge seeking. Organizations aiming to enhance knowledge sharing among employees may consider implementing activities or training programmes that strengthen empathy and prosocial behaviour within the organization. By doing so, they can create a more supportive environment in which individuals feel encouraged to share their insights and expertise.

This study also opens avenues for further research into how different types of prosocial behaviour, such as helping and volunteering, mediate the relationship between empathy and various forms of knowledge sharing (e.g., technical versus relational, explicit versus tacit, giving information versus asking questions). A deeper understanding of these dynamics may contribute to the development of more effective strategies for promoting knowledge sharing across organizational contexts, which is particularly important in today's corporate environment. Although the study indicates that the direct effect of empathy on knowledge-sharing behaviour is modest, its influence becomes substantially stronger when mediated by prosocial behaviour. This finding underscores the interconnectedness of emotional intelligence and collaborative actions in fostering effective knowledge-sharing practices.

The study shows a positive but relatively weak relationship between empathy and motivation. Empathy primarily influences emotions and interpersonal relationships rather than directly driving performance or motivation. Although the findings suggest that empathy can positively influence employee motivation in corporate environments, this effect appears to be modest, as motivation is shaped by multiple factors. For example, rewards and career growth opportunities may enhance motivation, whereas individual differences, uncertainty, and fear-related factors may negatively affect it.

Knowledge sharing is a complex and voluntary behaviour influenced by organizational culture, trust, leadership, technology, and social dynamics. Employees may be reluctant to share knowledge due to concerns about losing influence, lack of reciprocity, or perceived risks, which may explain why motivation does not significantly mediate the relationship between

empathy and knowledge sharing, whether in terms of knowledge giving or knowledge seeking. As knowledge sharing involves a degree of vulnerability and depends heavily on psychological safety, trust, social norms, and organizational culture, motivation alone may be insufficient to overcome these barriers. To strengthen this relationship, organizations need empathetic employees, supportive climates, psychological safety, and reward and recognition systems that enhance motivation and foster open communication. Together, these factors can help translate empathy and motivation into meaningful knowledge-sharing practices. These insights suggest that organizations should integrate emotional intelligence with motivational strategies to effectively promote collaborative knowledge exchange.

As an extension of this study, future research could examine the influence of different types of motivation—such as intrinsic motivation (e.g., internal drive, passion, and purpose) and extrinsic motivation (e.g., rewards, bonuses, and monetary incentives)—on knowledge-sharing behaviour. Finally, potential limitations of this study include its cross-sectional design, sample size and diversity, possible oversimplification of constructs, and the lack of distinction between different types of knowledge and motivation.

Future multilevel longitudinal research could open several new avenues based on the findings of this structural equation model. Multilevel analysis would allow researchers to examine data structured at multiple levels, such as individual and group levels. Incorporating additional factors—including organizational culture, trust, leadership, technology, social dynamics, and reward and recognition systems—would enhance understanding of how empathy influences prosocial behaviour, motivation, and knowledge sharing across different groups, communities, or organizational contexts.

By applying multilevel models, researchers could further explore whether relationships among variables, such as the effect of empathy on prosocial behaviour, vary across different levels or settings. For example, it may be important to examine whether the influence of empathy on prosocial behaviour is consistent across teams, departments, or organizations. Multilevel analysis can also accommodate contextual variables that shape individual behaviour, such as organizational culture, community norms, trust, and reward systems, thereby offering deeper insight into how these factors interact with empathy, motivation, and knowledge-sharing behaviour.

A longitudinal design would further strengthen such analyses by enabling the examination of changes within and between individuals over time. In longitudinal studies, motivation and prosocial behaviour

may evolve dynamically and, in turn, influence knowledge-sharing behaviour, including both knowledge giving and knowledge seeking. Longitudinal multilevel models would also make it possible to investigate complex interactions between predictors, such as how individual-level motivation interacts with group-level factors like organizational support to influence knowledge sharing.

Employing multilevel modelling can improve model fit by capturing correlations across groups that traditional analytical techniques may overlook, resulting in more accurate estimates of relationships between variables. Such findings could provide valuable insights for organizational policy and decision-making by identifying which factors, and at which level of analysis, most strongly influence behaviours such as knowledge sharing and prosocial actions. This, in turn, could support the development of more targeted and effective interventions. Overall, future multilevel longitudinal studies could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics among empathy, motivation, prosocial behaviour, and knowledge sharing by simultaneously accounting for both individual and contextual factors.

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EMPATIJA I NJEZIN UTJECAJ NA PONAŠANJE DIJELJENJA ZNANJA MEĐU
ZAPOSLENICIMA

SAŽETAK

Ovaj rad ispituje fenomen ponašanja dijeljenja znanja među zaposlenicima u organizacijama i istražuje ulogu empatije u tom kontekstu. Analizom podataka od 200 zaposlenika otkrili smo da empatija nema izravan i snažan utjecaj na ponašanje dijeljenja znanja, ni u smislu davanja znanja ni traženja znanja. Međutim, kroz prosocijalno ponašanje, empatija neizravno utječe na ta ponašanja.

Dodatno, procijenili smo utječe li empatija na motivaciju u smislu ponašanja davanja i traženja znanja. Naša analiza pokazuje da empatija nema očit utjecaj na motivaciju, a motivacija nema očit utjecaj na ponašanje zaposlenika kada je u pitanju traženje ili davanje informacija unutar tvrtki.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: *empatija, ponašanje dijeljenja znanja, prosocijalno ponašanje, motivacija, zaposlenici, organizacije*