

Diversity in Managing Knowledge: A Cultural Approach

Kavoos MOHANNAK

k.mohannak@qut.edu.au

*School of Management, Faculty of Business,
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia*

Abstract

This paper reviews diversity in knowledge management (KM) from a cultural perspective; it argues that culturally embedded theories and practices influence the practice of knowledge management. It further presents and analyses several case studies and in particular a case study of the Islamic culture focusing on its traditional approach to both Islamic knowledge and management. The analysis of this case reveals the cultural challenges that emerge in the process of applying essentially Western management theories within an Islamic culture with particular reference to knowledge management theories. The paper concludes that the concept of knowledge management must take into account the diversity of national culture in which the organization exists and that the concept of knowledge management will benefit from a diversity perspective rather than a universality perspective.

Key words: Knowledge management, cross cultural diversity, universalism, Islamic Culture, Islamic Management and Knowledge