Analyzing the influence of employee values on knowledge management in sport organizations

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Analyzing the influence of employee values on knowledge management in sport organizations

Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between employee values and knowledge management in sport organizations.

**Methodology:** Data \( N = 234 \) were collected online through a structured questionnaire from employees of 33 sport organizations in Iran. In order to test the hypotheses, Pearson correlation test and a regression analysis was conducted.

**Findings:** The results from the study revealed that there were significant relationships between employee values and knowledge management. Both instrumental and terminal values significantly influenced knowledge management.

**Research limitations/implication:** One limitation of this study is related to the generalizability of the results. Therefore, the current study is required to be replicated with other sport organizations in various sectors (public or private) to improve external validity of the results.

**Practical implications:** Based on this study, employees of sport organizations in developing countries tend to store knowledge more than sharing and applying it. The findings can be used by human resources and knowledge management practitioners who are interested in developing organizational knowledge through employees’ values.

**Originality:** Through this study, the positive roles of employee instrumental and terminal values, as the key drivers in determining intangible assets in organizations, were found.

**Keywords:** employee’s values, instrumental values, knowledge management, sport organizations.
1. Introduction

Knowledge is perceived as a source of priority, advantage, and even power, and employees are usually not willing to share knowledge without strong personal motivation as they may face a risk of losing personal privilege (Sharifkhani et al., 2016). On the other hand, in an organization characterized by a knowledge-related culture, employees recognize that what gives them power is not knowledge itself; rather, it is sharing and implementing knowledge that makes them more powerful (Intezari et al., 2017).

Knowledge management (KM) is to create and add value through influence and active power of knowledge and experiences that are in the minds of employees which in turn affects performance and innovation in organizations (Chen and Huang, 2009). Alongside a series of enablers (e.g., employee training, employee involvement, teamwork, employee empowerment, knowledge-friendly culture, etc.) which are often referred by many researchers as critical factors facilitating KM processes (Chong, 2006), it appears that employee-individual drivers (micro level dynamics) have great effect on their sharing of knowledge or involvement in KM process (Obembe, 2010). Through an empirical research, Atapattu and Jayakody (2014) add to the significance of soft antecedents (e.g., culture and people) for the success or failure of KM initiatives and claim that organizations should take the values of employees into account in any attempt to understand KM in organizations. Atapattu and Jayakody (2014) also highlight that “self-control of which the values are the determinants is the means through which the employees can be directed to engage in KM” (p. 311).

Intezari et al. (2017) believe that employees, as the most critical and fundamental factor involved in creating culture and influencing the process of creating knowledge, have their own values and address that “if employee’s values and beliefs are not completely aligned with the organizational culture, knowledge processes will be less likely to take place” (p. 505). In fact, when individual purposes and values become aligned with those of the corporation, this configuration expedites the individuals’ use of structure and their readiness to get involved in social interaction leading to knowledge sharing (Foss et al., 2009). According to Kirkley (2016), a specific set of values (beliefs) and needs motivates individuals toward the acquisition of the requisite knowledge, skills and experience to effectively be involved in the organizational processes. Thus, values which effect employee’s perceptions and behavior can be expected to control their involvement in KM (Atapattu and Jayakody, 2014).

Values have been widely believed to be a key construct for understanding and predicting human behavior (Rokeach 1973; Roccas and Sagiv, 2010; Schwartz, 2007). However, past literature provides theoretical evidence only supporting the influence of employee’s values on KM. Thus, there are a call for empirical tests in diverse cultural and economic contexts (Rahman et al., 2017) and the needs to survey the relationship between employee’s values and KM at their dimension levels (Pivec and Potocon, 2015). Accordingly, there is a call to empirically establish these relations (Bastos and Cordeiro, 2016), and explore the influence of employee’s values on the different knowledge processes (Pivec and Potocon, 2015). More specifically, although previous studies empirically investigate the relation between employee’s values and KM (Atapattu and Jayakody, 2014), knowledge acquisition (Pivec and Potocon, 2015) and knowledge sharing (Israilidis et al., 2015), the effects of dimensions of employee values (instrumental values and terminal value; see Rokeach, 1973) on KM have not been examined. According to what has been stated, the present study is an attempt to fill the gap in existing knowledge in knowledge management in sport organizations in a diverse context and one of the pillars of sport development.
To our knowledge, the current research is the first attempt to provide empirical evidence of the positive impact of employees’ values on KM in the Iranian context. In addition, the research shows how this effect occurs by analyzing the effect of instrumental and terminal values. As a result, the main research question is formulated as follows: Is there any significant relationships between employees' values and KM? To answer the research question, therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the impacts of employees’ values on KM and contribute to establishing its direction and movement towards dynamism and progress. Understanding this relationship in sport organizations in Iran would provide richer and more fine-grained understanding of the workplace management.

The structure of this paper is as follows. The conceptual framework supporting the current research is presented in Chapter 2. Based on the conceptual and empirical justifications from past literature, three hypotheses showing the proposed relationships between the research variables are proposed in Chapter 3. Research method used for data collection, instrument development, and data analysis are introduced in Chapter 4, followed by data purifications and main results in Chapter 5. The results are discussed in Chapter 6, and their practical and empirical implications are elaborated in Chapter 7, along with conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for future research in Chapter 8.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 The concept of value

Many studies in sport context have investigated organizational value (e.g., Cooper et al., 2015; Kerwin et al., 2014) and consumer value (e.g., Bodet, 2012; Lee et al., 2017; Lee and Trail, 2011). However, little attention has been paid to employee value in sport organizations. To generate more positive workplace behaviors, it is important to the management to understand and prioritize the values held by their employees (Abbott et al., 2005). In fact, leaders’ understanding of employees' values can assist them in analyzing and interpreting how values influence organizational behavior (Buchko, 2007), and create work procedures that are congruent with work behaviors the organization wishes to promote (Ev et al., 2017). In addition, studying values can embody a major role in directing employees toward organizational goals and processes, particularly in sport organizations where there is an increasing demand for sport and health, and sport employees operate in a dynamic environment, relative to which a number of employed individuals has rapidly increased (Slack and Parent, 2006).

In spite of the vast interest of values among researchers, practitioners, social critics, and the public at large, there is lack of agreement on the concept of values (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998) as “they share similar characteristics with concepts such as attitudes, preferences, and beliefs” (McGuire et al., 2006, p. 252). The word ‘value’ in its association with human belief is defined by Rokeach (1973) as hierarchical groups of “enduring beliefs about personally or socially preferred modes of conduct or end-states of existence” (p. 5). The concept of value is determined by instrumental values and terminal values in sport organizations (Hamm et al., 2008; MacIntosh and Spence, 2012). According to Rokeach (1973), terminal values refer to end-states of existence such as equality (equal opportunity for all) and social recognition (respect, admiration), and instrumental values are defined as modes of behavior used to arrive at end-states such as independent (self-reliant; self-sufficient) and courageous (standing up for your belief). He suggested that one’s instrumental values inform one’s decision making and planning, thus guiding his or her attempt to attain terminal values. In the same vein, Suar and Khuntia (2010) believed
that values are individual characteristics that provide a consistent framework from which individuals make decisions, solve problems and judge the world around them. Suar and Khuntia (2010) added that an individual who holds certain values will display corresponding behaviors more strongly if organizations help promote these behaviors. According to Schwartz et al. (2012), values are trans-situational purposes, varying in significance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or group. They argued that values are organized into a coherent system that explains individual decision making, attitudes, and behavior. Boroujerdi and Hassan Khan Pour (2014) concluded that employee’s instrumental and terminal values are prerequisites to prevent them from organizational deviant behaviors.

Due to an increase in production as well as media and sponsorship demands, employees in sport organizations are now being recognized as a significant contributor to the business industry, and their values have the ability to affect industries on a global scale (Hamm, 2006). Considering that employees’ instrumental and terminal values can help sport leaders to understand their behavior and preferences, it is significant for sport managers to have a sound grasp of the values which guide organizational behavior (MacIntosh and Spence, 2012). By examining employees’ instrumental and terminal values further, managers “can generally ascertain important information related to the individual and group level operations, performance, and other management considerations to help strengthen the internal working environment” (MacIntosh and Spence, 2012, p. 406). In the same vein, a better understanding of values would help managers create strategies in order to facilitate the knowledge based behavior of employees.

2.2 Related literature on employee value in sport organizations
The topic of employee value is an under-explored area in sport with only a few studies published in sport management journals. Amis et al. (2002) provided the basis for value research within sport organizations and indicated that congruence between employee values and organizational changes can enable employees to successfully engage in transition process of amateur sport organizations and vice versa. Trail and Chelladurai (2002) found that the role of managers of intercollegiate athletics would be more effective if they put their emphasis on specific processes and decisions congruent to values held by critical stakeholders involved within the programs. Hamm et al. (2008) investigated the level of value congruency between employees and nonprofit sport organizations. Hamm et al. (2008) addressed that “self-respect, social recognition, freedom and inner harmony as congruent terminal values, while accomplishment, wisdom, equality and family security as incongruent values and congruent instrumental values included ambitious, courageous, forgiven, and honest, while incongruent values included self-controlled, helpful, logical and capable” (p. 123). Lee et al. (2017) claimed that a few studies in the sport context offered some useful insights on the influence of personal values to managerial practices as well as sport consumption. Some studies in the sport context focused on individual values of consumers. Bodet (2012) outlined the relevance of consumer values in sport organizations and discussed consumer values to ensure loyalty and commitment in health and fitness clubs. Lee and Trail (2011) argued that marketers and managers of sport teams can benefit from a better understanding of personal values and goals and their influences on sport consumers in order to promote their teams and related services. Lee and Trail (2011) found the positive influence of personal values (and goals) on sport behaviors (e.g., sporting game attendance, televised sport watching, team merchandise purchasing).

2.3 Knowledge management in sport organizations
One of the most effective human resource management practices is KM which authorizes employees to create and foster positive attitudes (Hasani and Sheikhesmaeili, 2016). Alavi and Leidner (2001) refer to knowledge as a process of applying expertise and state that KM belongs to the knowledge flow and the process of creation, sharing, and distributing knowledge. In recent years, the main topics around KM “incrementally shifted from tools, contextual dimensions of knowledge, to knowledge embedded in processes and people” (Ferguson, 2016, P. 16). Today, more than ever, researchers on KM acknowledge employees as a key factor in KM process, which could affect the KM initiatives’ outcomes and conduct new human resource research and practices consistent with this acknowledgment (Zaim et al., 2018). Accordingly, organizations should start “to create worker-centered environments to encourage the open sharing and use of all forms of knowledge, such as tacit knowledge based on common sense and explicit knowledge based on academic” (Yun et al., 2015, p. 249).

At a sport organization’s level, KM enables organizations to operate in more efficient way. Several researchers have stated their interest in introducing KM methods in sport organizations and understanding individuals’ attitude and preferences towards new knowledge (Winand and Anagnostopoulos, 2017; Winand et al., 2016). Delshab and Sadeghi Boroujerdi (2018) stated that sport organizations should attempt to leverage and update the level of employees’ knowledge through coding plans in order to create a more appropriate context for the application and creation of a desirable KM. According to O’Reilly et al. (2007), workplace tools and structures which efficiently facilitate knowledge creation and sharing are essential to develop sport organizations’ performance. Such knowledge creation and sharing cultures result in developing individual and social possessions in sport organizations and make them more efficient and more flexible in terms of customer’s demand by improving employee’s performances (Allameh et al., 2014). In sport organizations, “the increased mobility of knowledge workers enables the opening up of more innovation opportunities related to sport” (Ratten, 2017, p. 63). Accordingly, sport organizations increasingly need to apply KM to be competitive in both national and international levels, also to avoid withdrawal of the knowledge forces such as; staff and managers (Gholipour Souteh et al., 2018).

### 2.4. Related literature on knowledge management as a consequence of value

Past research investigated the influence of KM processes (knowledge acquisition, knowledge conversion, knowledge application, and knowledge protection) on sport organizations effectiveness (Reisi et al., 2013). Based on Hoeber et al. (2015), insight into the nature of innovation in community sport organizations “will also have implications for the skills and KM required to identify, conceptualize, pursue, and implement these innovations” (p. 520). Wemmer and Koenigstorfer (2016) indicate that nonprofit sports clubs can gain outside knowledge to innovate via embracing competitors as external knowledge sources, while cooperating with them which in turn enhance organizational performance.

A few recent studies examined the core role of KM in the elite sport and event management contexts. For instance, Werner and Dickson (2018) highlighted the positive impact of knowledge sharing on elite players’ development and performance and call for future KM tactics to specifically use this untapped potential. Parent et al. (2014) indicated that hosting major sports requires organizers to learn from past events in the region as well as from past organizing committees of the same event, not to make the same mistakes which highlight the role of knowledge sharing processes. Therefore, the management of sport events based on KM is one of
the most innovative methods to improve efficiency and managerial perceptions in sport organizations in order to organize and host various events (Wenhui and Zhen, 2011).

Several scholars attempted to enhance theoretical justifications of KM (e.g., Atapattu and Jayakody, 2014; Bastos and Cordeiro; Pivec and Potocon, 2015; Rahman et al., 2017). Atapattu and Jayakody (2014) conducted an empirical research with 207 employees from the IT, telecommunication, food and beverages, and banking industries, grounded on Schwartz value theory and found values that employees possess (in this case, self-transcendence and openness to change) determine the success of KM initiatives. Furthermore, these values with an effect size of 0.28 moderate the effect of both teamwork and the availability of extrinsic incentives for KM on employee propensity for KM. Bastos and Cordeiro (2016) in a systematic literature review found a gap in the literature regarding “how team member’s values influence teamworking design and management in order to maximize the effectiveness of knowledge management practices on the shop floor?”. By doing so, they identified literature gaps to be explored in subsequent researches. Michailova and Minbaeva (2012) found that when the majority of employees agree that “knowledge sharing behavior is desired and valued”, they would participate in actual knowledge sharing and concluded that “in such situations, relevant knowledge may remain undiscovered, under-leveraged and trapped in individual minds” (p. 61). Similarly, Rahman et al. (2017) proposed that culture, leadership, and structure of the organization affect the development of employees’ desire and obligation mind-set which, in turn, influence knowledge sharing. Further, Israilidis et al. (2015) reviewed the literature of individual variables with an impact on knowledge sharing and identified that self-expression, trust/trusting relationships, altruism, self-interest concerns, sportsmanship and ethical concerns as employees’ values influencing knowledge sharing. MacIntosh and Spence (2012) introduced the perceived value of ‘connectedness’ as having significantly shaped the experiences of key stakeholders of the Commonwealth Games Association of Canada. This instrumental value contributes to a deeper appreciation for the internship exchange, and often resulted in lifelong friendships with their fellow association intern alumni. Also, knowledge exchange emerges as a value with respect to the significance to which stakeholders attached to information sharing and being open to learning new skills and ways of doing things. Pivec and Potocon (2015) conducted an empirical study on Slovenian medium and large organizations and found the influence of employees’ values on the acquisition of knowledge. By using a stepwise regression test, they showed that the dimensions of employees’ values including contribution of personal development and contribution of cohesion and loyalty to the organization explain 60.2% changes in knowledge acquisition while the third component, selecting the best employees, does not have a significant effect.

By reviewing the past literature, it can be concluded that although the previous studies investigated and confirmed the relation between employees’ value and KM. However, the impacts of the individual value dimensions (i.e., instrumental and terminal values) on KM has not been empirically tested.

3. Research Model and Hypothesis

The research model was based on the hypothetical relationships between two employees’ values and KM. In this research, employees’ values with dimensions of instrumental values and terminal values and KM represented by the dimensions of knowledge creation, knowledge acquisition, knowledge storage, knowledge sharing, and knowledge application are considered in accordance with the literature, and their proposed relationships are established on past literature. According to
Figure 1, the research model was derived from the employees’ values model (Rokeach, 1973) and the KM model (Sallis, 2002; Chen and Huang, 2007; Massa and Testa, 2009).

![Conceptual Model Diagram]

**Figure 1** The conceptual model

Based on the conceptual and empirical justifications from past literature in the areas of employees’ value and KM, three research hypotheses are established as follows:

- **H₁**: There would be a positive relationship between employee value and knowledge management.
- **H₂**: There would be a positive relationship between instrumental value and knowledge management.
- **H₃**: There would be a positive relationship between terminal value and knowledge management.

4. **Research Method**

The purpose of the research is to investigate the relationship between employee’s values and KM in Iranian sport organizations. The research method used in this study was inferential statistics. The study took place in autumn 2017, and the data were collected through an online survey from managers and staff in 33 youth and sport organizations in Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and Hamadan provinces in Iran. The independent variables consisted of employees’ value including instrumental and terminal values. The dependent variable was KM, explained by knowledge creation, knowledge acquisition, knowledge storage, knowledge sharing, and knowledge application.

4.1 **Measurement instruments**

To measure the variable of employee’s values, the researcher used the items that is supported in past literature on sport organizations (Hamm et al., 2008; MacIntosh and Spence, 2012). The Rokeach’s (1973) scale with 32 items to measure individual’s values was adapted as it “shows relevance for value research, especially in the clear division of values into values as standards of behavior (instrumental values) and values as transcendental goals or ideas (terminal values)”
In order to measure KM variable, the measures were adapted from Sallis (2002), Chen and Huang (2007), and Massa and Testa (2009), which included 25 items. The reliability and validity of the measures were supported by Sallis (2002) and Hasani and Sheikhesmaeili (2016). Face and content validity of the measures were tested by a panel of experts and specialists (35 individuals) in the field of sport management and relevant disciplines.

The items were measured by a 5-point Likert scale (i.e., very low, low, medium, high and very high), which enables respondents to express the opinion of the individual under the object of study with precision, allowing the individual being comfortable to express their opinion, using a neutral point and, thus, contributing to the quality of the answers (Dawes, 2008). The reasons for using a 5-point Likert scale over a 7-point Likert scale is that the 5-point scale appears to be less confusing and to increase a response rate (Dawes, 2008; Devlin et al., 1993). Also, this format was commonly used in the past literature on knowledge management (Delshab and Sadeghi Boroujerdi, 2018; Hasani and Sheikhesmaeili, 2016; Zaim et al., 2018).

4.2 Sampling and data collection
Sampling was performed using the simple random sampling method so that the questionnaire was designed online, and all the participants had the same chance to fill it. According to the Morgan's Table (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970) for a statistical sample, 242 employees were chosen as this size seems representative of the opinions of specified electronic users (Hill, 1998). Using the function in the online survey tool, the number of returnable questionnaires was limited to 242. The link of the questionnaire was sent to groups and channels on Telegram including 650 managers and staff of sport organizations in Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and Hamadan provinces. Following the Atapattu and Jayakody’s (2014) recommendations, repeated reminders were sent to the groups in due course. members of the groups and channel by repeated reminders of the questionnaire were asked to answer through the weblink. After a month of repeated reminders to encourage survey participation, as soon as the number of the returned questionnaires reached the limit, data analysis started. A total of 242 questionnaires collected, eight questionnaires were removed due to incomplete responses to several items. Accordingly, the analysis process was carried out with 234 questionnaires. A response rate was 37.2%.

4.3 Data analysis
The data were analysed with IBM SPSS 23. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the research data. Descriptive statistics were used for describing data. In order to use inferential statistics, after testing the reliability and validity of the scales, data normality was evaluated by skewness and kurtosis. To analyze the research data, Pearson correlation coefficient, and simple linear regression tests were used. A significance level used for this study was $p = .05$.

5. Results
5.1 Demographic information of the samples
The respondents’ demographic information is presented in Table 1. The dominant groups of the respondents were males (62.0%), ranged from 31 to 50 years old (72.7%), and hold bachelor’s and master’s degrees (84.2%). In addition, most respondents had more than five-year work experience (85.0%) and sport experience (86.7%).
Table 1. Profile of the respondents (N=234).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 30</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Diploma</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to diploma</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Experience (years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport Experience (years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Preliminary analysis

The mean and standard deviation values of the variables in Table 2 illustrates the average scores of employee’s values and KM components. On average, the respondents demonstrated instrumental values (M = 3.25; SD = 0.69), terminal values (M = 3.08; SD = 0.61), knowledge creation (M = 3.12; SD = 0.65), knowledge acquisition (M = 3.14; SD = 0.64), knowledge storage (M = 3.17; SD = 0.62), knowledge sharing (M = 3.06; SD = 0.69), and knowledge application (M = 3.10; SD = 0.67). As the results present, the employees of sport organizations surveyed showed moderate level for each component of KM with lower score for knowledge sharing and higher score for knowledge storage.

Kurtosis and Skewness coefficients are popularly used for normality test for large samples as many other tests such as Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Jarque-Bera test, and Shapiro-Wilk test almost always reject the null hypothesis of the normality of the measures. This is because when the number of samples gets larger, even the smallest deviation from perfect normality will lead to a significant result (Athari and Wang, 2018). Skewness is a measure of symmetry, or more precisely, the lack of symmetry. Kurtosis is a measure of whether the data are heavy-tailed or light-tailed relative to normal distribution. A perfect normal distribution would have both kurtosis and skewness coefficients equal to zero. However, the values between -2.00 and +2.00 for these measures are usually considered as an acceptable range for normal distribution (Kim, 2013).
According to Table 2, the statistics of both skewness and kurtosis were all within the recommended range, supporting univariate normality.

Lastly, Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were calculated to determine internal consistenc of the measures. For unidimensional scales, a Cronbach’s alpha value of .70 or larger is considered acceptable to ensure reliability (Hair et al., 2010). The Cronbach’s alpha values ranging from .81 to .92 seemed satisfactory (see Table 2 for more details).

### Table 2. Descriptive statistics and Cronbach’s alpha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental value</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminal value</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge creation</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge storage</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge sharing</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge application</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.3 Pearson’s correlation analysis

Table 3 shows the Pearson’s correlation coefficients among the research variables. The p-values in all correlations were less than the significance level of p = .05. The findings show significant and positive correlations between employees’ values and knowledge creation ($r = .68$), knowledge acquisition ($r = .63$), knowledge storage ($r = .70$), knowledge sharing ($r = .73$), knowledge application ($r = .65$), and KM ($r = .79$). Furthermore, it was found that instrumental values and terminal values were significantly correlated with KM and its dimensions (see Table 3 for more details).

### Table 3. Correlation coefficients among employee’s values and KM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Knowledge creation</th>
<th>Knowledge acquisition</th>
<th>Knowledge storage</th>
<th>Knowledge sharing</th>
<th>Knowledge application</th>
<th>KM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminal</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee’s values</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 probability level

### 5.4 Hypothesis testing

Regression analysis is widely applied in knowledge management studies (Boroujerdi and Hasani, 2013; Hasani and Sheikhesmaeili, 2016; Reisi et al., 2013). Thus, to test the hypothesis, a regression analysis was used. The path coefficients ($β$), t statistics, and p-values were calculated and presented in Table 4. In addition to them, the values of $R^2$ are also reported in Table 4. The test revealed the significant relationships between values and KM: employees’ value ($β = .79$), instrumental value ($β = .85$), and terminal value ($β = .68$), explaining 62%, 73%, and 46% of total variance explained, respectively. Therefore, H₁, H₂, and H₃ were all supported in this study.
Table 4. Results of linear regression between employee’s values and KM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$H_1$ Employees’ values</td>
<td>KM</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>5.54*</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_2$ Instrumental value</td>
<td>KM</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>7.87*</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_3$ Terminal value</td>
<td>KM</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>10.50*</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 probability level

6. Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the relationships between employees’ values and KM in Iranian sport organizations. The result of $H_1$ reveals that employees’ values significantly influence KM in sport organizations. This finding is consistent with the results of Atapattu and Jayakody (2014), Israilidis et al. (2015), Kirkley (2016) Michailova and Minbaeva (2012), and Pivec and Potocon (2015). Atapattu and Jayakody (2014) concluded the values that employees possess determine the success of KM initiatives. Furthermore, employees’ values moderate the effect of both teamwork and the availability of extrinsic incentives for KM on employee propensity for KM. Therefore, employee value is an important factor to create a suitable platform for organizational KM in sport organizations. Sport organizations should pay attention to increase employees’ values in order to create and facilitate the spirit of cooperation and knowledge sharing. Studies showed the influence of employees’ values on knowledge sharing (Israilidis et al., 2015; Michailova and Minbaeva, 2012) as well as on knowledge acquisition (Kirkley, 2016; Pivec and Potocon, 2015). The finding of the present study contributes to the current knowledge, indicating that managers need to also consider employees’ values while planning for knowledge creation, knowledge storage, and knowledge application. In other words, considering goals of different parts of organizations in terms of the KM processes such as the importance of knowledge sharing or applying in these parts, the value of the employees should be taken into account. And there should be a congruence between goals of organizational units regarding KM processes, and employees’ values.

With regard to $H_2$ and $H_3$, instrumental and terminal values significantly influence KM in sport organizations. These outcomes support the findings of MacIntosh and Spence (2012) and Pacharapha and Rachtham (2012). MacIntosh and Spence (2012) introduced ‘connectedness’ as an instrumental value that contributes to a deeper appreciation for the internship exchange and information sharing. According to the finding of Pacharapha and Rachtham (2012), it is understood that instrumental and terminal values of the managers and staff of Iranian youth and sport departments exerts an influence on their knowledge acquisition.

Razaghi et al. (2013) indicated that the organizational culture and human resource factors affect KM in sport organizations. Knowledge sharing culture, learning culture and the culture of organizational affiliation, staff training, and using full capacity in the human resources are processes that can be used to implement KM in sport organizations. The findings of the current research added to this line of efforts by providing a micro-level investigation that shows employees’ values as another determinant to the success of KM processes. Sports organizations in Iran are made up of employees with different (individual) values. According to the results of this study, managers of sport organizations should have a precise recognition of values and subcultures existing in their organizations in order to create intangible assets and increase KM.
Rokeach (1973) suggested that values guiding people's behavioral patterns are considered instrumental values. Based on the results of this study, it can be observed that instrumental values are able to direct staff of sport organizations to participate in KM processes. It is assumed that sport employees driven by these values might have a greater tendency to knowledge storage in order to achieve their goals in the organization. Since employees deem knowledge as a source of power, they may not want to share what they know in the organization as it would reduce their power (Renzl, 2008). Therefore, more worker-centered environments would enable employees to share various forms of knowledge and reduce their fear of losing values in Iranian sport organizations (Allameh et al. 2014; Yun et al., 2015). This is in contrast to the results of MacIntosh and Spence (2012), who introduced the perceived values of connectedness and knowledge exchange as instrumental and terminal values with respect to the significant sport stakeholders attached to information sharing and being open to learning new skills and ways of doing things. This discrepancy may be due to lack of job security, the economic and cultural status, and the types of job placement of the community surveyed. According to the findings of this study, it seems staff of sport organizations in developing countries such as Iran exhibits tendency to share, apply and create knowledge. At the same time, they may feel that such knowledge sharing behavior would decrease their job security. Thus, they may form slightly higher tendency to acquire knowledge and store it as a source of power and a means to maintain and improve their status. Accordingly, as a general idea in organizational communities, training and developing effective knowledge sharing infrastructures, human resource development as key elements of the KM processes, and promoting employees’ participations in applying and creating knowledge can align values of employees with organizational values. Consequently, this practice would bring a better position to implement a KM in organizations. Further, managers should pay attention to values and orientations of applicants during the recruitment process.

7. Implications

7.1 Practical implications
According to the social exchange theory, individuals look forward to maximizing their personal benefits and interests in their interactions with others at minimal cost (Cook et al., 2013). Based on this theory, in social exchange within organization, members learn to reciprocate each other through reciprocal communication and feel mutual trust and commitment (Cook and Rice, 2006). Social interactions facilitate knowledge sharing by allowing people to be aware of what their colleagues know (Connelly and Kelloway, 2003). Therefore, communication is valued and encouraged as part of interaction (Auernhammer and Hall, 2014). Base on the present study, practitioners can create an active and interactive working environment to reduce fears from the sharing of knowledge among employees by practicing group work in the organization. It would ultimately bring more positive organizational outcomes stemming from improved KM for their organizations.

Providing employees with motivation and enhancing team cohesiveness and social capitals can reinforce knowledge sharing behaviors and performance improvement in sport organizations (Allameh et al., 2014). Further efforts to investigate the efficiency of using management practices to encourage sport employees to teamwork and collaboration with aiming to reduce their dependence on values as a personal power are beneficial.

Also, it is evident that organizational compensation and rewards are related positively to KM (Lin, 2011). Employees are more likely to share and apply their knowledge with colleagues if they get rewarded. Managers of sport organizations can assess their employees based on their
involvement in knowledge process, rather than their organizational status. To this end, providing a reward and make-up system in order to encourage employees to contribute in activities including, creation, sharing and using knowledge, could be useful to sustain advanced knowledge within organizations even when (or in anticipation of) staff leave.

Employees’ knowledge-related behaviors are influenced by cultural aspects including one’s values, norms and roles (Gupta, 2008). Since organizational culture influences employees’ attitudes and behaviors in the work place, knowledge culture plays a crucial role in the success or failure of KM initiatives, and it can create a context facilitating social interactions, so that trust and confidence increase and lead to knowledge sharing (Intezari et al., 2017). Managers of sport organizations, by promoting a knowledge friendly culture, can encourage informal relationships and provide a friendly atmosphere among the employees. The effort would attenuate their concerns about personal aims and publicize the culture of knowledge sharing among them. Managers, by applying the principles of management, increasing their own capabilities in convincing employees to align their values and beliefs and providing a knowledge friendly culture, can also increase success probabilities in their organizations. Manager’s support to employees, guaranteeing their job security and providing the ground for job promotion, would remove threats of sharing their own knowledge and strengthen employees further, facilitating their success in their organizations.

According to Delshab and Sadeghi Boroujerdi (2018), to be independent from the traditional team and club managements which are not mostly based on scientific resources, sport organizations should build up significant factors of unlearning which is the process of discarding misleading knowledge and obsolete routines influencing learning process in organizations. By doing so, they could be successful in generating and sharing knowledge among the employees. It seems values which are embedded in employees’ behavior and ways of thinking can influence them to not rely on the traditional methods and update their knowledge. Therefore, it is recommended to consider employees’ values when creating an unlearning context in sport organizations.

Knowledge as a significant organisational asset “carries organizations and individuals to take brave steps toward the knowledge technology. KM has become more crucial within the business, science and social communities because of many activities of the organizations and the broader of science and social life today are knowledge-driven” (Zaim et al., 2018, P. 313). The present study aimed to understand knowledge-based behavior of employees in sport organizations in developing countries with different cultural and economic context. Therefore, this study can have several implications for science and technology, emerging economies, knowledge-based economy, knowledge management (creation, sharing, application, etc.), and policy management.

7.2 Theoretical implication
This study conceptualizes the relationship between employees’ values and KM in sport organizations and attempts to explain KM with the five dimensions (creation, acquisition, storage, sharing and application), compared to past studies which used two KM dimensions only, acquisition (Pivec and Potocon, 2015) and sharing (Israilidis et al., 2015). The present study also extends extant knowledge on employees’ values and KM (Atapattu and Jayakody, 2014), by conceptualizing employees’ values with two dimensions of instrumental and terminal values. Furthermore, studying employees’ values extends prior studies in sport context which vastly focused on organizational values (Cooper et al., 2015; Kerwin et al., 2014) and organizational culture (Razaghi et al., 2013), by adding to the significance of soft antecedents such as employees’ values for the success of organization.
The theory of planned behavior (TPB) was identified as one of the most significant theories to explain employees’ behavior and determining its effective factors. The TPB uses a measure of a subject’s attitude toward the behavior, the social climate surrounding the subject (or subjective norm), and the subject’s level of perceived control over the ability to engage in the behavior to predict behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991). Numerous investigators have applied the TPB to survey employees’ behavior in service organizations (Perkins et al., 2007). This study is in line with this theory, by confirming the contribution of employees’ values in predicting the behavior of KM in sport organizations. It indicates that employees driven by their instrumental and terminal values engage in the knowledge-based behavior. This behavior may have been motivated by three factors of TPB, particularly employee attitude. In fact, according to the TPB’s definition of the attitude, which is the employees’ positive or negative evaluation of the consequences of behavior, it seems the concepts of values and KM are highly embedded in TPB. Therefore, this theory would be helpful in applying KM based on employees’ values.

8. Conclusions, Limitation and Future Research

8.1 Conclusions
The empirical analysis of this study exhibits that employee value is a significant indicator to organizations trying to achieve KM. It has been acknowledged in the current study that employee values, namely, instrumental and terminal value, plays a significant role in accomplishing KM in sport organizations, whereas employees put more emphasize to store knowledge more than to share it. This justifies the desire of employees to perceive knowledge as a source of priority, advantage, and power. Therefore, the study recommends sports organizations to have a solid understanding of employees’ values and make it congruent with organizational objectives to reach intangible assets. Based on this study, effective managerial mechanisms that influence employee values to create a knowledge-based organization have been suggested.

8.2 Limitation and future research
Since sport organizations work mostly in the field of offering indirect services to members and the types of merchandises and services offered are different from those given by other service organizations, it is difficult to generalize the findings of this research to other organizations. In addition, this study has been conducted in Iran, which is a developing country. Thus, conducting research in sport organizations in developed countries could yield different results. Moreover, as values are influenced by cultures, different countries and cultures can be explored in future research, especially countries with more cultural diversity.

While the value measurement scale that used in this study is supported in past studies in the sport context, future research can apply other value scales such as well-known European Value Survey of Schwartz (1994) and investigate the influence of values on KM in sport organizations with a multidimensional perspective.

Another limitation is that because the questionnaires were filled out electronically, no facilitator was present to help respondents. This may lead to misunderstanding of the questions. Additionally, the researchers in this study have considered the least number of samples, based on Morgan Table, which in turn could lead to bias. Future research could consider a bigger same size.

The importance of employee values and KM leads to a continued need to further investigate these constructs in sport organizations. Specifically, future research could investigate other potential antecedents to employee’s values. Variables such as culture of knowledge sharing and
enhancing employees job commitment could function to decrease their tendency to maintain knowledge as a power source, which in turn increases the sharing and application of knowledge and success in implementing the KM in sports organizations. Future research can investigate the relation between employees’ attitude toward knowledge storage as a tool for power acquisition and KM and its process in sport organizations. Through forming changes in employees’ attitude over maintaining knowledge, sport managers would develop more appropriate strategies to improve KM in sport organizations. KM has a significant role in successful holding of sport events. It is recommended to conduct a survey to investigate the significance of workshops to develop employees’ and volunteers’ attitude toward knowledge and congruence of their values to each other in order to create successful events based on KM.

The present study, for the first time, has comprehensively investigated the relationship between employees’ values and KM. However, the number of variables chosen for the study is limited. Considerations of other variables such as top management support, policies of the team management, information and communication technology, remuneration, or personality of employees would be worthwhile.

References


