



Responsible
Humane
Strategies for
Gender
Equality,
Empowerment and
Leadership

Editors

Ajoy Kumar Dey
Hanna Lehtimäki

B L O O M S B U R Y

RESPONSIBLE HUMANE STRATEGIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY, EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP

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Editors

AJOY KUMAR DEY

AND

HANNA LEHTIMÄKI

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Positive Design of the "Sweet Spot" in Trans-Organizational Collaborations

Wanda Tisby-Cousar¹, Mary Katungu² and Rishi Tiwari³

ABSTRACT

Managers are tasked globally to improve human welfare in trans-organizational collaborations. Given differences in U.S. and India economies and leadership styles, analyzing the discourse has become imperative for management to understand their role in sharing knowledge. Skills are required in policy development, advocacy, teaching, and stakeholder engagement to develop objectives that socially impact communities. Ultimately, objectives of businesses, government, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are accomplished. In this case study sustainability discourse as it relates to management practice in the holistic implementation of programs that improve human welfare, education and mental health will be uncovered. The existing "sweet spot" and areas of opportunity will be identified. Objectives will be developed that move the organization toward goal achievement. The methodologies of Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge and Positive Design will be reflected as proposed frameworks for developing trans-organizational collaborations among businesses, government, and NGOs to improve lives in the U.S. and India.

Keywords: Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge, Life Skills, Mental Health, Positive Design, Sweet Spot, Trans-Organizational.

1. INTRODUCTION

Collaboration is paramount to improve human welfare. Several factors are considered in the Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge. The study of organizations that improve lives with missions focused on human welfare will be conducted for what strategies are most effective to achieve objectives considering the discourse. The sustainability "sweet spot" will be revealed as the common ground shared of business interests among financial stakeholders and interests of public non-financial stakeholders (Weber, 2006).

¹ Associate Adjunct Professor Business and Management, Colorado Technical University online
Email: wcousar@coloradotech.edu

² Education Specialist, Colorado Springs School District 11
Email: marykatungu@gmail.com

³ Senior Librarian, and Proctor Students Welfare, Birla Institute of Management Technology
Email: rishi.tiwari.ac.in

Disclaimer: This case has been developed for classroom discussion and is not intended to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation or to represent successful or unsuccessful managerial decision making or endorse the views of the management.

The purpose of this study will be to develop a positive design that can be used when engaging insurmountable endeavors, yet could be improved with Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge methodology. By doing so, trans-organizational collaborations achieve objectives.

The non-governmental and government organizations managed include community outreach in palliative care, corrections (jails and prisons) and public education. The collaborations must ultimately reduce obstacles to performance, facilitate the achievement of organizational objectives and contribute to sustainable strategic plans. The collaborations aim is to reduce workload and increase the capacity of the manager. The countries of the organizations studied include the U.S. and India and the populations served by the organizations include India residents and the U.S. culturally diverse.

Exploring the discourse of societal arguments of whether human welfare is sustainable, each organizations' "sweet spot" will be identified. In these case studies, the historical backgrounds of education and mental health programs will be discussed to discover how objectives have been met.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify a positive design for the "sweet spot" by exploring the discourse and programs in industries concerned with human welfare.
2. To determine the management strategies used that have been most effective in achieving targeted outcomes.
3. To analyze how sustainability practices of knowledge sharing, contributes to human welfare and societal well-being.

Non-governmental Organizations and the "Sweet Spot"

It was in the year 2009, a non-governmental organization (NGO) named Ranganathan Society for Social Welfare and Library Development was formed, named after the father of the library movement in India. The librarian joined a college in the year 2005. Until then, the college was primarily concentrating on academics. In the initial years, the NGO started conceiving the idea of creating libraries in the villages to help the rural masses and school children. In this process, starting 2009, until December 2017, established a total of twelve such libraries providing up to 500 books and storage racks. It was expected that the villagers, through their village chief would keep the libraries going and upgrade through their own local resources. However, it did not happen and slowly the libraries dissipated. As a sequel to this, the librarian started approaching the local jails to speak to the authorities and get their interests and feedback. It turned out that the authorities highly appreciated the idea and readily came out to support the move. As a start, the District Jail DASNA (Ghaziabad) in the Uttar Pradesh state of India was selected, as it was the largest jails in the state housing about 4,500 inmates. The finances needed for such an effort were worked out and it was discussed with the jail authorities. However, unfortunately enough, the jail authorities expressed their limitations as there was no such provision in the jail budgets.

The librarian approached the director of the college of 1,040 students, who readily agreed to support the initiatives from out of the institute's budget. It was felt that the initial libraries must have at least 2500 books. The needed storage racks/almirahs were estimated and it was also decided to install a computerized system for the library management. The Director sanctioned a computer for this purpose. The librarian also installed a library management system and made it operative. The first such libraries were established on the 27th March 2012 in Dasna Jail, district. Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.

In 2017 three libraries had been established in three different districts. The sixth library was established in the district of Agra in Uttar Pradesh. Additionally, there are nine (9) rural libraries and six (6) computer centers. Boarding is in every prison in this district according to Rishi Tiwari, (personal communication, December 2, 2018).

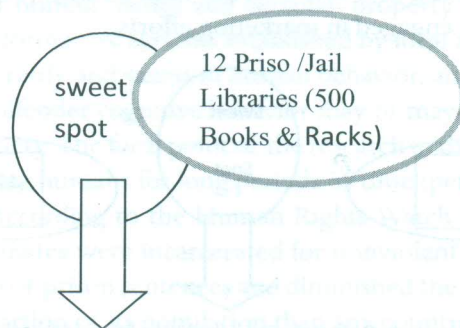


Figure 1. Ranganathan Society for Social Welfare and Library Development's "Sweet Spot".

3. POSITIVE PRISON AND PRISONER IMPACT

1. Reduced violence
2. Reduced suicide
3. Increased literacy
4. Computer training of prisoners in library administration

Other (NGOs) have participated in trans-organizational collaborations that address human welfare. Such organizations concern themselves specifically with the mental health of those in healthcare receiving palliative care. One such organization, the Rajbala Foundation a national NGO founded by Satish Kaushik, business consultant and psychologist who also serves as a trustee.

PROJECT उडान is an initiative in psychological well-being. Satish Kaushik (personal conversation, June 22, 2018) shared the organization's mission:

"Rajbala Foundation under its Project Uddan intends to help people, including children, adolescents, adults and elders dealing with typical life stresses and more severe issues with which they might struggle as individuals and as part of families, groups and organizations (Kaushik, 2018)."

Since 2010 the organization has been working in the fields of healthcare and education. Its primary focus in health care has been to increase awareness of palliative care and to propagate the use of alternative therapies that help to alleviate the emotional pain of patients and their caregivers (Kaushik, 2018). Palliative care is a specialized medical care focusing on improving the quality of life of patients suffering from life-threatening illnesses (Sangeeta & Sinha, 2017). It addresses symptom management and psychosocial and spiritual concerns of the patient and its caregivers, with the intent to alleviate the sufferings of terminally ill patients. The collaboration with schools, universities and other educational organizations, addresses which is referred to as the “Adolescent Dilemma” (AD) and includes biological, cognitive, psychological and social challenges (Kaushik, 2018). The “sweet spot” has been uncovered by engaging stakeholders in this endeavor. The impact of four psychological counseling centers (PCC) has been experienced by 6000 students and 450 faculty. The reach at the grassroots level has been 8 Lakhs (800,000.00 U. S. dollars). Three community radio stations are engaged in marketing efforts.

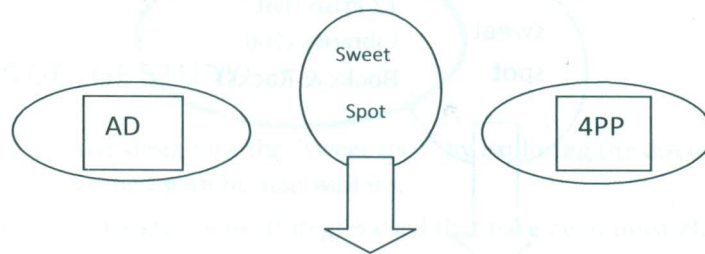


Figure 2. Rajbala's Sustainability “Sweet Spot”

4. IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH

1. Biological
2. Cognitive
3. Psychological
4. Social

The Search for the “Sweet Spot” in a Colorado Public School

The high school, the educator will be working at, has approximately 1,333 students. The demographics are as follows 38% white, 38% Hispanic, 14% Black, 6% two or more races, 2% Asian, 1% American Indian/Alaskan native and less than 1% Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander. According to the Great Schools rating (2017), this school is rated below average in school quality compared to other schools in the state. Students here perform below average on state tests, below average college readiness measures, are making below average year-over-year academic improvement, and this school has below average results in how well it is serving disadvantaged students. GreatSchools staff (2018) reports that many diverse schools experience an achievement gap which means that some groups of students achieve at a much higher level than other groups, especially on standardized tests. Gaps can exist between groups of students of different backgrounds (e.g., ethnic, racial, gender, disability, and income) on tests, on access to courses

and special educational opportunities, and on other indicators such as high school and college completion and employment later in life (National Education Association. 2017). The purpose of this literature review is to identify the discourse, factors that contribute to student achievement gaps with the school's control because they are the predictors of students' life outcomes. By identifying the practices, the school's internal and external stakeholders will determine how they contribute to human welfare and societal well-being.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

The U.S. Penal System

Prisons are public and private institutions designed to house criminals who commit egregious and acrimonious crimes against human nature and personal property in the U.S. Prisons, jails, and rehabilitation centers are reformatory systems established by local and state government. The US penal system is designed to ratify and sanction human behavior, and in rarity modify the way the offender thinks. Improved offender cognitive behavior may or may not lead him or her towards a better functioning life in society. The focal point of the research in this synopsis explores the "cause and effect of institutionalizing humans for long periods of time (personal communication, Prison Sargeant, April 1, 2018)." According to the Human Rights Watch reports on U.S. prisons: Fifty-three percent of all state inmates were incarcerated for nonviolent crimes, while criminal justice policies increased the length of prison sentences and diminished the availability of parole. The U.S. incarcerated a greater proportion of its population than any countries except Russia and Rwanda: more than 1.7 million people were either in prison or in jail in 1998, reflecting an incarceration rate of more than 645 per 100,000 residents, double the rate of a decade before. Approximately one in every 117 adult males was in prison (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

However, it is important to note that government reformatories are physical structures within a specific geographical location which is made up of a unique kind of social environment. For instance, prisons or lock-ups are segregated from societal norms such as people, businesses and communities. Despite this fact, there are some lock-ups that house lawbreakers in the community. For example, local jails, courts, and holding cells are privy to house criminals in the short and long-term. A stay may result from an offender court appearance or legal representation. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), statisticians Gilliard & Beck (1997), on June 30, 1996, 1,164,356 prisoners were under Federal or State jurisdiction (includes prisoners in custody and persons under the legal authority of a prison system but who are held outside its facilities). The total increased by 5.3% from midyear 1995. The States and the District of Columbia added 54,549 prisoners; the Federal system, 4,256. Local jail authorities held or supervised an estimated 591,469 offenders. Twelve percent of these offenders (72,977) were supervised outside jail facilities in programs such as community service, work release, weekend reporting, electronic monitoring, and other alternative programs. (Gilliard & Beck, 1997, p.1).

According to a manager in a Colorado Correctional facility, (personal communication, Prison Sargeant, April 1, 2018), should institutionalization be a humane process, inhumane dynasty, or strict punishment? The "cause and effect of institutionalizing humans for long periods of time can

be deadly." Consequently, "Are there grounds for improving detention centers inside the walls of doom and the point of no return?" However, the integral process for U.S. citizens within society, reflects up-holding and abiding by its Constitutional laws enacted by governmental entities. The laws of the land curtail breach of the decree means punishment by fine or imprisonment. Yet in the case of Ranganathan Society for Social Welfare and Library Development the "sweet spot" emerges in the penal system given the collaboration and work of an NGO that seeks the stakeholder engagement of a college.

The Dilemma of Cultural Diversity in Public Education

GreatSchools staff (2018) reports that many diverse schools experience an achievement gap which means that some groups of students achieve at a much higher level than other groups, especially on standardized tests. Gaps can exist between groups of students of different backgrounds (e.g., ethnic, racial, gender, disability, and income) on tests, on access to courses and special educational opportunities, and on other indicators such as high school and college completion and employment later in life (National Education Association, 2017). The purpose of this literature review is to identify factors that contribute to student achievement gaps within the school's control because they are the predictors of students' life outcomes.

Schoolwide factors can have a negative impact on student learning. National Education Association (2017) reports that teachers may have low expectations for student achievement; the teachers implement the curriculum that lacks rigor. Also, teachers track students by placing them in less demanding courses instead of Advanced Placement classes, International Baccalaureate etc. Balfanz & Legters (2004) report most of the underperforming schools are around poverty-stricken areas with high rates of unemployment, crime, and ill health. Consequently, there is a correlation between poverty and high school dropout rates.

The U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2011) found that students from low-income families dropped out of high school five times more than students from high-income families in 2009. Poverty, teacher expectations and the kind of curriculum implemented in school can cause student achievement gaps. Exploring the concerns on the discourse and programs cause can have an impact on student welfare.

Sheridan (2006) found that many educators struggle to serve students from cultures other than their own. Subsequently, the study implies that teachers are struggling to teach a significant increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students in schools. According to LaRocque (2013) and Pells (2017), the difficulties educators encounter with teaching these students are the result of cultural dissonance because the student population is becoming increasingly diverse; however, teachers remain predominantly white and middle class. Therefore, the National Education Association (n.d.) found that the cultural gap between students and their teachers can be a factor in students' academic performance and contribute to increasing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

Another reason teachers' have challenges is that teacher preparatory colleges, and programs are not equipping teacher candidates with knowledge and skills to work with culturally and

linguistically diverse students (Quezada, 2014; Kolano et al., 2014). Educators are unable to engage families because they are unfamiliar with diverse needs specific to culture and language. Therefore, educators often perpetuate stereotypes such as families are not invested in their children's education, which leads to the minimum effort in reaching out and listening to their unique needs and interests (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Stereotypes can affect the way teachers and students interact with each other as well as impede acceptance and understanding between culturally different groups. Consequently, students may lose interest in learning because educators portray they are not interested in students' education since students come from backgrounds that are different from their own (Hutchins, Greenfield, Epstein, Sanders, & Galindo, 2012). The school personnel can address the school culture and societal values and norms through the community outreach programs.

Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) found the barriers parents encounter to engage in their children's learning are: (a) motivational beliefs, (b) perceptions of invitations to become involved, and (c) personal life context. Kim (2009) reports that parents' self-efficacy for involvement in their children's education may be a barrier to parents of low socioeconomic status (SES). For example, parents of limited educational backgrounds may lack the confidence to interact with teachers and navigate the school. Subsequently, they may be deficient with the necessary sets of skills and knowledge to assist their children with assignments, especially beyond the elementary school grades. Also, Some parents' negative school experience may shape their self-efficacy and serve to distance them from schools (Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007).

Van Velsor et al. (2007) found that some teachers may not invite parent involvement because of their frustration with low-achieving, low SES students. According to Kim (2009), teachers' negative perceptions about the efficacy and capacity of low-income parents and their beliefs that families are the source of their students' achievement problems, deter parents from being involved in their children's education.

Low-income parents may have hectic lives because of work which often serves as a barrier to devote time to attend school meetings, volunteer at the school or participate in other parent involvement activities (Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007). Similarly, such parents are more likely to have inflexible work schedules, multiple jobs, and/or positions without paid leave benefits to attend school activities. Consequently, participation in the full culture of the school is limited. Moreover, limited resources hinder the ability to address the basic needs of children contributing to further time constraints that negatively affect the parents' involvement in their children's learning. According to Velsor et al. (2007), low-income parents may experience financial and time constraint factors that can result in psychological barriers which can have a negative impact on their mental health including depression. Consequently, parents may have limited capacity to engage in school activities.

For the school to achieve the goal of parents engaging in children's learning, school personnel can perform a needs assessment to find the needs of the families. Knowing the parents' needs that prevent their involvement in their children's education, school personnel can coordinate resources and services with interested community stakeholders to ensure that families and students' needs

are met. When school personnel and community partners collaborate to meet parents' needs, families can become actively engaged in their public schools and become an integral part of school improvement efforts to close the student achievement gap.

6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge (ASK) method described by Tatchenkery (2008), provides a simple method not requiring complex IT systems or forcing people to exhibit new behaviors requiring training or special incentives. It is less likely to escalate the accused "white and middle class" of not meeting the needs of the culturally diverse as in the case of the low performing school. Efforts to find common interests and uncover knowledge enablers to develop objectives and a positive design for sustainable value uncover things that people are already doing to share knowledge with one another. Involving them in experimenting with ways to strengthen those naturally occurring processes (Thatchenkery, 2008, p.10), presents a more holistic approach. It would be in lieu of what may be interpreted as a mandate to teach in a culturally responsive manner or attend training outside of the workday at a conference, thereby compromising their work-life balance as an example ASK would serve as a reflective activity to free time.

The researcher experienced a spare of the moment tour 2 hours prior to departure to the airport from 2017 India conference campus back to the U.S. Fortunately, the researcher adapted to the culture to take the tour. Later efforts to Skype or "What's App" calls that failed to "relieve doubt" as the intention communicated by the librarian over email, confirmed that ASKs methodology was appropriate for the study. It implies the limited need for "complex IT systems or focuses on deconstructing problems rather than focusing on "know how", (Thatchenkery, 2017, p. 10). By conducting researcher participant interviews using ASK, forcing people to exhibit new behaviors was not required.

8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There were four participants in this study. Phone and face to face videotaped interviews were methods of data collection. Organizational structure, number, and type of individuals served, type of services and stakeholders involved in projects. Email communication was facilitated by an assistant professor on June 13, 2018, with the researcher and first participant. The second participant jailer was visited on location at the district jail. The third participant was a librarian that escorted the researcher on a guided tour of a jail. The fourth participant was a US educator, also an expert in leadership working with culturally diverse students.

During the 2 hours before the researcher's flight departed, a tour of a district prison where a library was established in 2014 was made by the second participant librarian who was interviewed in route to the jail. The librarian is a 48-year-old male with a master's degree in Library and Information Science and Ph.D. in Library Management who also has responsibilities as Dean of Student Welfare. He has been with the college for 12 years to date.

The third participant jailer in the study is a 47-year-old male who has an MBA degree and was promoted to the jailer in 2015. He had been assigned to the district jail the past 3 months, visited by the researcher and librarian. According to the jailer 'Convicts who are below 7-year sentences

are kept there. There is a capacity of 3750 inmates and 1923 prisoners are logged here, 1737 are male prisoners and the rest (186). There is a structure of circles and 124 barracks among three circles. One circle is for female prisoners and another for the hospital.

The NGO founder is a 62-year-old male who was copied on the email and contact information was exchanged. After the first call from founder to a researcher on 6/15, a scheduled time was agreed upon. The actual phone conference was conducted in a private room at Library 21c, Colorado, USA using a Samsung S2 device and phone app. Documents sent following the 45-minute conference were sent by email, a PowerPoint presentation, and brochure.

The participant educator of the culturally and linguistically diverse students is a 42-year-old female with an Education Specialist degree in Education Leadership and a master’s degrees in English Language Learning and Deaf Education. The educator participated in using text messaging and phone interviewing. The interview questions are in the annexure.

7. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The interview with the librarian in route to the district prison tour was an ASK opportunity that may have been lost had the researcher been focused on the timeframe and lack of trust that the librarian would return to the campus in time to meet the ride to the airport for departure.

A referral by a board trustee of an NGO to the founder directly for the researcher to interview and write about, ASK was a better approach to accommodate the cultural values and norms of respondents. The author and time zone differences of Pacific, Mountain, and India time zones when interviewing was overcome with a focus on “know how” (Thatchenkery, 2017).

When a new U. S. author, the education specialist in leadership, needed a peer review of a graduate paper a recent experience of the specialist being bullied in the workplace was discovered. The researcher negotiated an exchange using Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge. The researcher would conduct the peer review and the education specialist would assist with the case studies literature review. Thereby both authors replaced focusing on the “know how” (Thatchenkery, 2017) rather than missing the deadline and negative workplace experiences.

Communication, Leadership, Sustainable Organizational Practices, Community Investment, Community of Scholar-Practitioners emerged as Knowledge Infrastructure factors. Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Values and Norms, and Trust emerged as Knowledge Enablers in the interviews. The ASK matrix results from the interview below is a segway to positive design.

Figure 3: Knowledge Sharing Matrix

	Collaboration	Empathy	Culture	Trust
Leadership	Examples of support from administration	Examples of concern in policy	Examples of adapting to values/norms	Examples of honoring requests
Communication	Examples of adapting to schedules	Examples of how to engage	Examples of active listening	Examples of belief
Sustainable Practices	Examples of impact	Examples of concern for family	Examples of mindful cultural service	Examples of removing doubt
Scholar/ Practitioner Community	Examples of scholars implement practice	Examples scholar’s passion for outreach	Examples of unfamiliar accepted	Examples of teamwork

8. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

ASK has valuable implication in Positive Design for sustainable value. Though two of the business cases demonstrated a “sweet spot”, organizations still must move beyond it to solidify a positive design for sustainable value. Sustainable value is holistic and embraces a universal value stance that caters to all stakeholders. It is also generally recognized that a major issue in the creation of sustainable value is the need to satisfy organizational stakeholders (Thatchenkery, Cooperrider, & Avital, pp. 2-3). It is sustainable to leverage what is currently working by sharing knowledge that is tacit in nature. It also alleviates the negative responsiveness from leaders and their employees when what they are currently doing is recognized. They are also more likely to participate in the practice of ASK if they are not subject to losing their jobs which can be quite threatening. Typically, employees may not want to share what they know, fearing that once they share their specialized knowledge, they may not be needed (Thatchenkery, 2017, p.16)

9. CONCLUSIONS

The prison tour’s video-recorded interviews with the jailer revealed the organizational structure and importance of having senior authority’s support to implement effective programs and a physical tour of facilities programs that had achieved favorable outcomes for prisoners. Additional strategies were also shared in the ASK process and revealed how this prison had become a model for other prisons/jails. The tour ended with a delightful tea break, a custom of Indian culture further illuminating the ASK process’s benefit from cultural norms and values.

Cultural values and norms emerged particularly when an interview uncovered how conservative values can prevent individuals and their families from seeking mental health in palliative care. It also revealed how music and art were effective therapies for children. The ASK process among universities and schools profoundly contributed to the sustainable value of human welfare.

The academic achievement gap predicts gaps in what researchers call “life outcomes” — long-term health, income, employment, and incarceration rate (Molland, 2018)

The new U. S. author added sustainable value to the positive design with cultural values and norms as an expert working with culturally diverse students and families. Before searching for the “sweet spot”, had a recent experience that focused on the lack of data to support if local programs conferences to train in diversity worked. New to the ASK process, thinking that time was wasted on such prior problem seeking endeavors would not be the focus. The new author also served on a trustee board with a mission that championed diversity and reducing incarceration and was questioning if efforts produced desirable outcomes since there was no data to analyze the previous focal point. Now with this new methodology “how is” will be the new focus.

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ANNEXURE

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What has been the benefit to society of programs that address mental health?
2. What has been the benefit to students and faculty of mental health programs?
3. What has been the benefit to society of reform and therapies?
4. What are the outcomes programs that focus on human welfare?
5. How have managers and organizations addressing community outreach through knowledge sharing?
6. How has culture and societal values and norms been practiced in the process of community outreach?
7. What is the positive design that managers can use as a tool in finding and ultimately sustaining the “sweet spot”?
8. How has leadership ensured services achieve objectives of organizations with knowledge sharing?
9. How have leaders and stakeholders collaborated to achieve positive outcomes of objectives?

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