

ANALYSIS OF CO-WORKING SPACE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR
FOSTERING INTERACTION AND CREATIVITY - A CASE OF 23 SPECIAL WARDS
OF TOKYO, JAPAN

Delgerekh Tuvshin, GPSS-GLI, ID 47-176841

Advisor: Professor Atsushi Deguchi

Co-Advisor: Assistant Professor Shogo Kudo

ABSTRACT

With access to a fast internet server and personal devices, people can complete work assignments without commuting to one specific workstation. Transformation of work practice is affecting workplaces in a way that the work environment is becoming a commercial product, that offers space and service in exchange for value. Over the last one-decade co-working space has been evolved as a major trending workspace service with drastic expansion rate through all over the world. Co-working space is defined as a collaborative consumption of office environment, in which a group of individuals with heterogeneous backgrounds co-locates themselves and works side by side. Modern workers thrive to co-working spaces because of its flexible and well-designed features and a community of co-workers. Social interaction at co-working spaces enables serendipitous encounters and access to a necessary network, knowledge, and other sources that modern professionals seek.

The recent studies have been focusing on the potential role of co-working space to contributing a process of generating creative and innovative outputs. As creative individuals and innovative firms explore or create new ideas and products by articulating co-working space amenity and community of diverse workers. However, there is a lack of research study interrogated the practical tools that entice creativity at co-working spaces. Thus, this study focuses on management strategies and their impacts on the process of formulating an interactive and collaborative work environment that harness creative outcomes. The research emphasizes

on following specific questions to fill the research gap: 1) Which strategic management tools are used in co-working spaces to stimulate interactions and collaborations? 2) What is the process of implementation of management tools? 3) To what extent management tools enable the individual or collective creative behavior?

The main research objective is to clarify the role of co-working space to enhance the interactive and creative work environment by implementing management strategies. The research undertook two specific objectives to address this. First was to identify the interactive type of co-working spaces. The second was to assess the role of managerial strategies related to individual and collective creative behavior.

The author used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. First, a conceptual framework was proposed to build a theoretical background and structure a research design to conduct an empirical study. Second, a selected case study area, in which the author assessed the conceptual framework, was introduced. In order to investigate the existing co-working spaces in site selection area, the research systematically collected and analyzed a data set gathered from secondary sources. Next, the author conducted a key informant interview with managers from purposively selected ten co-working spaces to investigate practical management tools and their functions. Overall, the research is exploratory in nature due to the lack of previous studies conducted both in the research topic and selected site area.

The research contributes to both academic and practical level of discussions on co-working space by developing on a 'work environment for creativity assessment model' as a conceptual framework and conducting a case study in Tokyo, Japan. Japan is facing various complex social and economic issues such as aging and shrinking population, labor shortage, and slow economic growth. Because of that the Japanese government and major corporates have started implementing new policies to change the traditional workstyles and emphasizing on creativity and innovation for social and economic prosperity. It is unique as well as significant to study

co-working space and their potentials in a society which has been experiencing dynamic transitions.

The research findings revealed the major managerial elements that affect the creativity prone work environment. Each management strategies consists of different approaches to build a community of interactive and collaborative co-workers. The results outline the four major managerial elements which are manager's engagement, spatial features, user's attributes, and services and activities. Holistically, management tools influence on user's creative capability by offering opportunities to access to a flexible workplace, a community of network, new knowledge and skills, serendipitous encounter, and personal and professional support system.

Lastly, research findings noticed that the provider's motivation is one of the most crucial factors that define the nature of co-working space and thus the managerial strategy. The key informant participants shared their co-working spaces' strategic objectives. Interestingly, many of the co-working spaces are aim to solve major social and economic problems, such as slow economic development, increasing vacant property, and lack of proper workplace that suits modern workers in Japan. Based on the findings, co-working space can be recognized as a sustainability-driven urban enterprise that it resolves current economic and social constraints through its innovative services and the act of empowering a community of inventors.

Key words: Co-working space, Creativity, Collaboration, Interaction Strategy, Tokyo