EFFECT OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM SECTOR IN KENYA: A CASE OF KENYA TOURISM BOARD (KTB)

JOY EVELYN MUMBI NJAGI, DR. HAZEL GACHUNGA

The Strategic JOURNAL of Business & Change MANAGEMENT
ISSN: 2312-9492 www.strategicjournals.com

Vol. 4, Iss. 2 (44), pp 779 - 796, May 25, 2017, www.strategicjournals.com, ©strategic Journals

EFFECT OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM SECTOR IN KENYA: A CASE OF KENYA TOURISM BOARD (KTB)

Joy Evelyn Mumbi Njagi[1], DR. Hazel Gachunga[2]

[1] Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture (JKUAT), Kenya
[2]Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture (JKUAT), Kenya

Accepted: May 22, 2017

ABSTRACT

Kenya Tourism Board is charged with the responsibility of marketing Kenya as a tourist destination of choice. Statistics from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics indicate that the number of tourists coming to Kenya has declined over time. Despite knowledge being recognized as an important asset many organizations are not doing enough to effectively manage this important asset for competitive advantage. Effective knowledge management can help an organization to improve internal processes, customer services and products. This study sought to determine the effect of knowledge management on performance in the tourism sector in Kenya with special focus on Kenya Tourism Board. This study adopted a case study research design. The study population for this study was 72 employees of Kenya Tourism Board at their head office in Nairobi. Quantitative data collected were analyzed using SPSS (Version 20). The study established that the organization identified the skills needed to attain organizational goals, experienced staff needed to apply available knowledge more effectively and apply the right skills and knowledge in the right task. The study concluded that knowledge identification affected the performance of the Kenya Tourism Board and to a great extent; this was because the Kenya Tourism Board identified the skills needed to attain organizational goals. The study concluded that knowledge acquisition affected the performance of the Kenya Tourism Board and to a great extent; this was because skills acquisition through research improved the way resources are utilized.

Key Words: *Knowledge Identification, Knowledge Acquisition, Performance of Kenya Tourism Board*

INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive environment, many organizations are engaging in Knowledge Management (KM) in order to leverage knowledge both within their organization and externally to their stakeholders and customers. Knowledge is the true asset of a marketing-oriented organization, and its integration across departments and disciplines should be emphasized (Tan, 2011). The re-use of information and knowledge minimizes the need to refer explicitly to past projects; reduces the time and cost of solving problems, and improves the quality of solutions during the construction phase of a construction project (Rajender & Kumar, 2012).

Organizations engage in knowledge management because of the numerous benefits that KM brings in enhancing business performance (Wong, Yee, Ling, Lin & Leong, 2012). KM is now seen as one of the hottest issues in economic development, referring to the world of industry, service and information research. The adoption and implementation of KM practices is a critical stage for companies that wish to be integrated into a knowledge based economy. Evidence shows that organizations are paying increasing attention to their systems of knowledge management to ensure that they are capturing, sharing and using productive knowledge within their organizations, in order to increase learning and to improve performance. Literature knows no universal definition to define Knowledge Management. Several enabling activities should be considered to help in achieving the ultimate goal of efficient experience and knowledge reuse; experience and knowledge should be preserved and managed; that is, they should be captured, modeled, stored, retrieved, adapted, evaluated and maintained.

Knowledge has increasingly been recognized as the new strategic imperative of organizations. The most established paradigm is that knowledge is power. Therefore, one has to hoard it, keep it to oneself to maintain an advantage (Uriarte, 2008). In 2005, the Multimedia Development Corporation of Malaysia considered knowledge as an important resource which has to be effectively and efficiently managed for organizations to leverage and obtain competitive advantage in the dynamic business environment. The new, knowledge-based economy places great importance on the creation, use and effective diffusion of knowledge (Ford & Staples, 2006; Metaxiotis, Ergazakis & Psarras, 2005). Each firm must be able to accumulate certain intangible knowledge assets that are relevant to its diverse operations. The new paradigm according to Uriarte is that within the organization, knowledge must be shared in order for it to grow.

Zheng, Yang and McLean (2010) in their study suggested that practices of knowledge management are context-specific and can influence organizational effectiveness. Managing knowledge effectively can provide businesses with several competitive advantages, including average level of KM, service quality improvement, cost and time reductions, strengthened relationships among colleagues and quicker knowledge creation (Wong *et al.,* 2012). Just like any other practice management, work to build a program of KM would begin with the awareness of leaders and members of the organization to the benefits that will come from the implementation of a KM program to the organization (Huang, 2011). Building and development of the strategy, with concrete steps of work for the implementation of KM and its clear communication through the members of the organization is indispensable.

Komanyane (2010) in his study on Knowledge Management Practices in the Public Sector in Botswana. Komanyane (2010) argues that that information management rather than KM is being practiced. The respondents, senior public service managers, certainly recognize the value of and the need for KM. But, they themselves identify certain weaknesses, such as lack of knowledge of KM among their staff, weak communication inside and across the departments, lack of policy and lack of good KM systems. A study carried out by Jain (2013) with the sole aim of establishing whether academic libraries in East and South Africa were practicing Information Management or Knowledge Management revealed that most (65%) of all the participating librarians considered themselves as information managers.

Wanjiru and Gathenya (2015) explain that knowledge management is very critical in social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship is of essence innovative which enables social enterprises to be competitive in their economic mission. It also enhances the enterprises achievement of the social objectives. Knowledge management enables socially entrepreneurial organizations to identify business opportunities before competitors do so. It enables them to come up with novel ways of combining resources already within their exposure to achieve their social missions. Knowledge sharing within the organization is critical for performance of organizations in social entrepreneurship both in its economic and social missions. Knowledge sharing enhances social enterprises innovativeness and allows them to grow more alert to opportunities (Huckman & Staats, 2011).

In spite of Kenya being known as a favourite tourist destination in Africa, there are still many challenges that her tourism sector is experiencing (Gitau, 2014). Although tourism has been and continues to be an important source of revenue for Kenya, and a source of livelihood for many, its dynamics have changed in the wake of terrorism and increased competition (World Bank, 2014). The tourism industry in Kenya has suffered from the issuance of travel advisories by foreign governments in the last two to three years as these advisories resulted in a reduction of foreign tourists, which in turn led to the closing down of hotels and the laying off of staff. Also, the country also faces increased competition from alternative tourist destinations such as South Africa, the Far East and Asia (Gitau, 2014).

The Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) was established through legal notice no. 14 of 7th Feb 1997 under presidential order, namely Kenya Tourist Board order, 1997, under the legal provision of the State Corporations Act Cap 446, laws of Kenya and subsequent review of the legal notice. The specific mandate of KTB, as per the Gazette Supplement, is detailed as follows: to promote and market Kenya as a tourist destination locally and internationally; to establish public relations services to address issues concerning the image of the tourism industry in Kenya and facilitate the resolutions of conflicts within the industry; to work in partnership with national, regional and international organizations, and local authorities in order to improve the tourism environment; to monitor the quality and standards of facilities available to both local and international tourists and advice the private and government agencies on how to improve the facilities for the targeted markets; to develop and maintain professional personnel to deal with issues that adversely affect Kenya's image in the tourism industry; and to initiate education and awareness programmes on tourism locally and abroad (KTB, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) tourism accounts for 12 percent of Kenya Gross Domestic Product (GDP), earning annual revenue of $1.1 billion (KNBS, 2014). Kenya Tourism industry has been on a decline since 2013, the number of tourists visiting Kenya dropped by 15 percent 2014 compared to 2013 (RoK, 2014). In 2015, the number of visitors to Kenya fell by 25 percent in the first five months (KTB, 2015), showing how badly the industry has been damaged by a spate of Islamist militant attacks that have killed hundreds. Kenya Tourism Board is mandated with the responsibility of marketing Kenya as a tourist destination of choice. It runs a number of programs geared towards convincing tourists to visit Kenya Tourist sites. In the tourism sector, knowledge management is becoming a popular tool in enhancing competitiveness (Huang, 2011).

Kenya Tourism Board can effectively use knowledge management to enhance the competitiveness of the Tourism Sector in Kenya. Newman (2009) views knowledge management as a discipline that seeks to improve the performance of individuals and organizations by maintaining and leveraging the present and future value of knowledge assets. Knowledge management systems encompass both human and automated activities and their associated artifacts (Huang, 2011). Any organization manages its knowledge, its expertise, eliciting the documents, procedures, etc., disseminating them for example, via training, organizing exchanges of any form with their collaborators. What is new is the strategic dimension of knowledge, as a resource of competitiveness and performance (Gitau, 2014).

A number of empirical studies done in Kenya include Cheruiyot, Jagongo & Owino (2012) who studied knowledge management in manufacturing enterprises in Kenya, Nyawade (2005) carried out a case study of BAT Kenya on Employee Perception of Knowledge Management Practices. Osano (2007) studied knowledge management within publicly quoted firms in Kenya. Likewise, Murianki (2008) surveyed knowledge management structures among Internet Service Providers in Kenya, while Wangari (2009) studied the linkage of critical success factors and knowledge management systems at Olivado Kenya (EPZ) limited, Asava (2009) studied knowledge management for competitive advantage within commercial banks in Kenya. Most of these studies had been carried out in profit making organizations and as such the findings, could not be generalized in the context of public sector organization like Kenya Tourism Board.

There are convincing reasons for organizations such as Kenya Tourism Board to adopt knowledge management practices, to enhance the competitiveness of the tourism sector in Kenya, in the wake of declining tourist number in Kenya. With the identification of the critical role that knowledge management plays, the question arose on how organizations like Kenya Tourism Board that are not necessarily driven by profit manage knowledge of their employees and the entire organization as a whole to enhance their competitiveness. It was against this background that the study sought to determine the effect of knowledge management on performance in the tourism sector in Kenya with special focus on Kenya Tourism Board.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to determine the effect of knowledge management on performance in the tourism sector in Kenya using a case of Kenya Tourism Board. The specific objectives were:

- To analyse the effects of knowledge identification on performance of Kenya Tourism Board
- To assess the effect of knowledge acquisition on performance of Kenya Tourism Board

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Resource-Based View of the Firm

Resource Based View theory to achieving competitive advantage emerged in 1980s and 1990s, after the major works published by Wernerfelt, The Resource-Based View of the Firm, Prahalad and Hamel the Core Competence of the Corporation), Barney, J. (Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage) and others. The Resource-Based View of the firm suggests that performance is driven by the resource profile of the firm while the source of superior performance is embedded in the possession and deployment of distinctive resources that are difficult to imitate (Wernerfelt, 1984). RBV proposes that firms achieve sustainable competitive advantage if they possess certain key resources and if they effectively deploy these resources in their chosen markets (Barney, 1991). O'Cass, Weerawardena and Julia (2004) argues that a firm's specific characteristics are capable of producing difficult to imitate core resources which determine the performance variation among competitors The resource-based view further stipulates the fundamental sources and drivers of firms' competitive advantage and superior performance is mainly associated with the attributes of their resources and capabilities which are rare, valuable, difficult to imitate and not substitutable.

The resource-based view (RBV) of the firm proposes that firm performance depends on firm specific resources and capabilities (Baker & Sinkula, 2005). Grant (1991) puts forth levels of durability, transparency, transferability and replicability as the key RBV determinants. Amit and Schoemaker (1993) argue that complementarity, scarcity, low tradability, inimitability, limited substitutability, appropriability, durability and the overlap with strategic industry factors constitute the key firm resources. Day (1994) argued that those intangible assets such as market orientation, knowledge management and organizational learning allow firms to develop abilities that enhance competitive advantage leading to enhanced market performance.

Collis and Montgomery (1995) suggest that the value of a resource can be tested by the levels of inimitability, durability, appropriability, substitutability and competitive superiority. Morgan, Kaleka and Katsikeas (2004) argue that the RBV of the firm consists of internal resources of the firm such as physical, financial, experiential and human capital resources such as management experience, training, judgment, intelligence, relationships and individual manager insight. These resources can generate a competitive advantage which eventually leads to superior firm performance. Similarly, O'Cass and Weerawardena (2010), asserts that a firms' competitive advantage may be determined by the strategic resources it possesses.

The resource-based view of a firm will be used in this study to establish how knowledge management resources can be utilised to enhance Kenya Tourism Board performance. Knowledge management has been seen as a valuable resource that is inelastic in supply and that leads to competitive advantage. Distinctive competencies shape the strategies the company pursues, which build superior efficiency, quality, innovation, or customer responsiveness. In turn, this leads to competitive advantage and superior performance.

Knowledge-Based View of the Firm

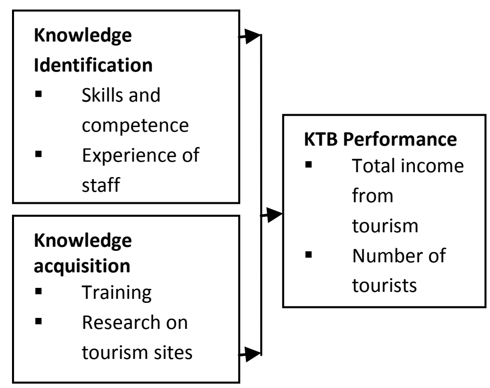
The knowledge-based theory of the firm was pioneered by Wernerfelt (1984), the knowledge-based theory of the firm considers knowledge as the most strategically significant resource of a firm. Its proponents argue that because knowledge-based resources are usually difficult to imitate and socially complex, heterogeneous knowledge bases and capabilities among firms are the major determinants of sustained competitive advantage and superior corporate performance. This knowledge is embedded and carried through multiple entities including organizational culture and identity, policies, routines, documents, systems, and employees. Originating from the strategic management literature, this perspective builds upon and extends the resource-based view of the firm (RBV) initially promoted by Penrose (1959) and later expanded by others (Wernerfelt 1984, Barney 1991, Conner 1991).

Although the resource-based view of the firm recognizes the important role of knowledge in firms that achieve a competitive advantage, proponents of the knowledge-based view argue that the resource-based perspective does not go far enough. Specifically, the RBV treats knowledge as a generic resource, rather than having special characteristics. It therefore does not distinguish between different types of knowledge-based capabilities. Information technologies can play an important role in the knowledge-based view of the firm in that information systems can be used to synthesize, enhance, and expedite large-scale intra- and inter-firm knowledge management (Alavi & Leidner 2001).

Whether or not the Knowledge-based theory of the firm actually constitutes a theory has been the subject of considerable debate. Foss (1996) and Phelan & Lewin (2000). According to one notable proponent of the Knowledge-Based View of the firm (KBV), “The emerging knowledge-based view of the firm is not a theory of the firm in any formal sense” (Grant, 2002, p. 135).

In summary, the KBV illustrates that firms can differentiate themselves on the basis of their Knowledge Management Strategies (KMS). While each of the individual knowledge assets is complex to acquire and difficult to imitate, firms that achieve competitive advantage through KMS have also learned to combine their knowledge assets to effectively create an overall KM capability. This study sought to establish how the knowledge-based view of the firm could be used to explain the heterogeneity in performance of Kenya Tourism Board. The knowledge-based view considered a firm to be a “distributed knowledge system” composed of knowledge-holding employees.

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variable **Dependent Variable**

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is an indicator used to measure the ability of an organization to meet its set objectives (Yilmaz & Ergun, 2008). It can be assessed by an organization’s efficiency and effectiveness of goal achievement (Robbins & Sanghi, 2007). Organizational performance is based upon the idea that an organization is the voluntary association of productive assets, including human, physical, and capital resources, for the purpose of achieving a shared purpose. Performance is organizational ability in producing something related to desired targets (Brooks, 2006). Performance is work results achieved by someone or a group of people in an organization, in accordance with their respective authority and responsibility to reach the organizational goal legally, without breaking laws, and in accordance with moral and ethics (DuBrin, 2012).

Epstein (2010) points out that performance refer to the quality and quantity of individual or group work achievement. A number of studies have applied different ways to measure organizational performance. Schein (2011) reviewed organizational effectiveness models, integrated these measurements of organizational performance from various studies, and generalized these measurements into three dimensions: financial performance, business performance and organization effectiveness. Bulach, Lunenburg and Potter (2012) suggested two ways to assess Organizational performance: Organizational performance and market performance.

Organizational performance is concerned with product or service quality, product or service innovation, employee attraction, employee retention, customer satisfaction, management/employee relation while market performance is concerned with organizational marketing ability, total growth in sale, and total profitability (Yilmaz & Ergun, 2008). Researchers have used financial and non-financial metrics to measure organizational performance. This study was concerned with non-financial metrics to measure organizational performance since KTB is a non-financial organization. Non-financial measures include productivity, quality, efficiency, attitudinal and behavioral measures such as commitment, intention to quit, and satisfaction (Kandula, 2006).

Farashahi and Molz (2005) observe that culture is strength but can also be a weakness. As a strength, culture can facilitate communication, decision making and control, and create cooperation and commitment. As a weakness, culture may obstruct the smooth implementation of strategy by creating resistance to change.

Singh (2011) asserts that an organization's culture could be characterized as weak when many subcultures exist, few values and behavioral norms are shared, and traditions are rare. In such organizations, employees do not have a sense of commitment, loyalty, and a sense of identity. Rather than being members of an organization, these are wage-earners. Traits adopted by organizations that have weak cultures include: politicized organizational environment, hostility to change, promoting bureaucracy in preference to creativity and entrepreneurship, and unwillingness to look outside the organization for the best practices (Kotter & Heskett, 2005).

Raduan (2008) observes that, a high degree of organization performance is related to an organization, which has a strong culture with well integrated and effective set of values, beliefs and behaviors. However, many researchers concur that culture would remain linked with superior performance only if the culture is able to adapt to changes in environmental conditions. Furthermore, the culture must not only be extensively shared, but it must also have unique qualities, which cannot be imitated (Dasanayake & Mahakalanda, 2008).

Dasanayake and Mahakalanda (2008) states that, studies have shown that organizational culture has a direct impact on other vital performance outcomes of any organization, including customer satisfaction and business growth and the strong effects of organizational culture are consistent across a wide spectrum of businesses and industries, from education institutions, churches, automotive sales and service and fast-food retailing to home construction and computer manufacturing. Corporate culture can affect an organization's bottom line (Stewart, 2010).

Knowledge Identification

Knowledge Identification is a process within Knowledge Management. We start therefore with the KM literature; we define KM and look at the

role KI plays in KM, before examining the KI process individually. Knowledge Identification refers to the process of proactively identifying internal organizational knowledge. Other researchers use different terms to refer to KI. KI involves identifying what knowledge is needed to attain organizational goals and what knowledge exists within the organization acquiring the knowledge needed. New knowledge is often created as the outcome of the KM process (Dasanayake & Mahakalanda, 2008).
Finding out what knowledge is needed and what knowledge exists within the organization is one of the first KM processes to undertake. In order to determine what knowledge needs to be acquired, developed, shared, retained, or utilized, organizations should first establish what knowledge exists within their organization, that is their internal knowledge, and where the knowledge resides (Jennex & Olfman, 2004). The outcomes or deliverables of Knowledge Identification not only help determine what knowledge is needed and identify who knows what within the organization, but also act as an enabler for subsequent KM processes. Effectively, practicing knowledge identification potentially leads to more effective KM (Jennex & Olfman, 2004).

Failure to practice KI causes several problems. Failure to identify internal knowledge means not being able to apply the right knowledge, in the right form, at the right time. It also means acquiring knowledge already existing within the organization, thereby duplicating projects and wasting resources, thus perpetuating what is widely recognized: organizations often reinvent the wheel (Robertson, 2002). Due to an ageing workforce, the risk of losing knowledge itself has become a serious concern (Stam, 2009).

Knowledge sharing systems, expert finding systems, organizational network analysis, knowledge mapping, and expertise transfer are the common methods used in Knowledge identification (Maybury, 2006). Practicing KI using these search engines remains a difficult task nevertheless. KI has a positive impact on other KM processes and ultimately impacts KM positively. KI potentially influences KM effectiveness, if organizations are to leverage the knowledge that they have effectively for organization performance. Organizations need to know who or where their knowledge sources are and what knowledge those sources hold in the first place (Dasanayake & Mahakalanda, 2008).

Knowledge Acquisition

Knowledge acquisition is the process of extracting, structuring and organizing knowledge from one source, usually human experts, so it can be used in software. For knowledge to be managed it must first of all be captured or acquired in some useful form. Knowledge acquisition (KA) is a complex process which traditionally is extremely expensive. KA is captured by six factors: Valuing employees attitudes and opinions and encouraging employees to up-skill, having a well-developed financial reporting system; being market focused by actively obtaining customer and industry information, being sensitive to information about changes in the marketplace, employing and retaining a large number of people trained in science, engineering or math, working in partnership with international customers, and getting information from market surveys (Stam, 2009).

Five factors describe the knowledge dissemination construct: readily disseminating market information around the organization, disseminating knowledge on-the-job, using techniques such as quality circles, case notes, mentoring and coaching to disseminate knowledge, using technology. Key literatures addressing the role of knowledge and its management in organizational performance are the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm and the knowledge-based view (KBV) of the firm

(Robertson, 2002). Both of these take as their starting point the core assumption that competitiveness of the firm does not so much depend on its product-market positioning in relation to external competitors, as on its internal characteristics. According to the KBV performance differences between organizations accrue due to their different stocks of knowledge and their differing capabilities in using and developing knowledge. Thus an important focus of the KBV is how knowledge resources are utilized and coordinated in organizations i.e. management of knowledge (Moreover & Jennex, 2007).

Empirical Review

Organizational performance

Khan (2011) shows that training and development, on the job training, training design and delivery style are four of the most important aspects in organizational studies. The focus of current study was to understand the effect of training and development, on the job training, training design and delivery style on organizational performance. He also explained that performance is the key element to achieve the goals of the organization so to performance increases the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization which is helpful for the achievement of the organizational goals.

Karagoz and Oz (2008) notes that work on organizational performance started in the 1930's. It has been defined as proficiency of the organization at having access to the essential resources (Henry, 2011). Lejeune and Vas (2009) observes that majority of business oriented organizations have used profitability measure of business economic performance. He also notes that when measuring profitability, organizations will monitor growth in sales. Deform and Nyssens (2010) established that other measures that have been used for organizational performance include organizational survival, changes in number of employees. Financial measures of organizational performance have been criticized as not being adequate. They do not show the full picture of an organizations performance some non-financial measures that have been adopted include market share, patents received, and stakeholder satisfaction.

McCann (2004) views organizational performance as the ability of the organization's successful fulfillment of their goals through core strategies. Other scholars have defined organizational performance as the adequacy of internal business processes, or the satisfaction of key constituencies. There is no single sufficient measure of organizational performance Venkatraman and Ramanujam (2006) says that there are three general domains of organizational performance; financial performance, operational performance, and the influence of stakeholders. Drucker 1954 argues that the ultimate measure of an organization's performance is survival. To this end, he gives eight performance aspects that are crucial for survival (An *et. al.,* 2011). These are; market standing, innovation, productivity, physical and financial resources, profitability sufficient to cover the risk premium for being in business, manager performance, worker performance and attitude, and public responsibility. Hertelendy (2010) notes that different measures to organizational performance have been used over time with critics saying that no sufficient reasons for the measures have been given.

Knowledge Identification

Pathak (2009) observes that when identifying knowledge needs the key driving consideration must be how the knowledge gaps identified will help the organization achieve its objectives if the knowledge gap is bridged. Failure to do this may result to a lot of resources being committed to a knowledge management process that the organization doesn't need (Sharma, 2009). Knowledge identification in organizations can be in three different levels, the organizational level, at group level and at individual level (Vogelsang, 2009). When identifying knowledge needs, one should start with the knowledge needs at organizational level (Taneja, 2009). When doing these internal and external contexts of the knowledge needs should be considered. At organizational level, the knowledge needs will consider what resources are required and which are available to bridge the gap (Sindhu, 2009).

From the organizational level, knowledge needs assessment should move to the departments, teams, and work groups. Lam (2009) proposes that a lot of emphasis should be placed in teams because a lot of organizational operations and results are being achieved by teams. The last level of needs assessment should be at individual employee's level (Sankarasubramanian, 2009). This will help establish if the current knowledge level of the employee is adequate to meet his job specifications or new knowledge is necessary. The analysis at individual level also established the readiness of the employee for new knowledge acquisition (Stam, 2009).

Biswas, Varma and Ramaswami (2012) observe that there are various strategies an organization can use to identify the knowledge it needs. One strategy is to establish what knowledge the organization already has. This is also called Knowledge audit or knowledge mapping (Sankarasubramanian, 2009). By identifying what knowledge, the organization already has, it might be realized that the organization does not actually need new knowledge but rather needs to share and apply the currently available knowledge more effectively (Nevo *et al.,* 2009). Identifying existing organizational knowledge is not easy though due to, amongst other things, its tastiness (Robinson & Ensign, 2009). Nonetheless there are various methods that an organization can use to identify its existing knowledge. One is knowledge sharing systems like intranets, wikis and blogs (Sindhu, 2009).

Alfes Shantz, Truss and Saone (2013) identify the following as crucial stakeholders to involve when assessing organizational knowledge needs; senior managers, mid-level managers, employees, trainers and subject matter experts. Senior managers will look at the knowledge gaps from the overall organizational level. They will consider the overall organizational strategy and policies rather than specific jobs. Mid-level manager will be more concerned with the knowledge gaps in their specific departments and how filling those gaps will help enhance performance of the specific departments (Gavaran *et al,* 2003).

Knowledge Acquisition

Ohierenoya and Eboreime (2014) in their paper knowledge management practices and performance in Nigerian universities point out that Knowledge is acquired through education, on-job training, mentoring, seminars, conferences and workshops. Universities are citadels of learning. There is no doubt that academic and non-academic staffs have acquired knowledge over time. However, the problem is that the knowledge may not be properly managed. Most of the universities do not have knowledge management programs in place because of inadequate planning and so control becomes very difficult. The net result is that a lot of staff retires, and sometimes there is nobody to take over and so the universities have to advertise for top cadre jobs. In this case the universities lose their knowledge a valuable resource through such retirement.

Bourini *et al.,* (2013) suggests that knowledge acquisition is captured by six factors: Valuing employees attitudes and opinions and encouraging employees to up-skill, having a well-developed financial reporting system; being market focused by actively obtaining customer and industry information, being sensitive to information about changes in the marketplace, employing and retaining a large number of people trained in science, engineering or math, working in partnership with international customers, and getting information from market surveys. Five factors describe the knowledge dissemination construct: readily disseminating market information around the organization, disseminating knowledge on-the-job, using techniques such as quality circles, case notes, mentoring and coaching to disseminate knowledge, using technology (such as teleconferencing, videoconferencing and groupware).

Hsu, *et al,* (2007) while looking at the factors affecting KM adoption in small and medium size enterprises in Taiwan write that with the growing importance of the knowledge economy, the internet has brought its users grand and abundant information. Enterprises have transformed from traditional competition to knowledge competition. Research has shown that knowledge has become an important tool for strengthening an enterprise's competitive advantage. The researchers quote who points out that a critical key in whether an enterprise can succeed or not, is its ability to efficiently acquire and apply knowledge, transfer and preserve knowledge, or furthermore, create knowledge (Drucker, 2006).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A case study research design was adopted. According to Kothari, (2006) a case study design is a way of organizing data and looking at the object to be studied as a whole, a case study makes a detailed examination of a single subject or a group of phenomena. The target population for this study was the employees of various organizations in the tourism sector in Kenya. The study populations for this study were the employees of Kenya Tourism Board at their head office in Nairobi. The study population composed of 72 members of staff in different managerial levels currently working at Kenya Tourism Board head office in Nairobi. Questionnaires were designed to determine the effect of knowledge management on performance in the tourism sector in Kenya using a case of Kenya Tourism Board. The researcher administered a questionnaire to each member of the target population.

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study targeted a sample size of 72 respondents from which 65 filled in and returned the questionnaires making a response rate of 92.4%. The study sought to determine the gender category of the respondent, and therefore requested the respondents to indicate their gender category. From the research findings the study established that majority of the respondents as shown by 58% were males whereas 42% of the respondents were females, this is an indication that both genders were fairly involved in this research and thus the findings of this study did not suffer from gender biasness. The study requested the respondent to indicate the length they had worked at the company. From the findings, majority of the respondents as shown by 41.5% had worked for the company for a period of 5-10 years, 38.5 % of the of the respondents indicated working for 10-15 years, 15.4% of the respondents indicated they had working for below 5 years and 4.6% of the respondents indicated working above 15 years. The study requested the respondents to indicate their position level in the organization. From the study findings most of the respondents 56.9 % indicated being other staff, 32.3% of the respondents indicated being senior staff whereas 10.8% indicated being top management staff. This implied that majority of respondents had credible information about the organization due to their position in the company and thus they were in a better position to give credible information in regards to this study.

Knowledge Identification

Table 1: Effect of Knowledge Identification on Performance

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
In this organization we identify what skills are needed to attain organizational goals	0	0	11	30	24	4.20	0.94
In this organization we apply the right skills and knowledge in the right task	0	0	10	23	32	4.34	1.06
Knowledge identification leads to more effective, skilled and competent employees	0	0	5	25	35	4.46	1.19
In our organization experienced staff share and apply the currently available knowledge more effectively	0	0	7	33	25	4.28	1.03
In our organization senior managers help in identifying competent staff	0	0	5	33	27	4.34	1.09

On the respondent's level of agreement with statements relating to knowledge identification on the performance of the Kenya Tourism Board, the study deduced that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that knowledge identification led to more effective, skilled and competent employees as shown by a mean of 4.46. It was also deduced that the Kenya Tourism Board applied the right skills and knowledge in the right task as shown by a mean of 4.34 and the senior managers helped in identifying competent staff in the organization as shown by a mean of 4.34. It was found that experienced staff shared and applied the currently available knowledge more effectively as shown by a mean of 4.28 and the Kenya Tourism Board identify the skills needed to attain organizational goals as shown by a mean of 4.20. Finally, it was established that knowledge identification improved performance of organisation as the identification of the employees with the right skills and competencies enabled the employees to perform tasks with ease and also enhanced their effectiveness.

The above findings were in line with the findings of Yilmaz and Ergun, (2008) who found that organizational performance is an indicator used to measure the ability of an organization to meet its set objectives. The study finding also concur with the findings of Robbins and Sanghi, (2007) who established that knowledge identification can be assessed by an organization's efficiency and effectiveness of goal achievement.

Knowledge Acquisition

Table 2: Effect of Knowledge Acquisition on Performance

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
In our organization employees understand the services they provide	0	0	10	35	20	4.15	0.97
In our organization employees are able to solve various challenges	0	0	10	40	15	4.08	1.03
In our organization employees gain skills through training	0	0	5	50	10	4.08	1.30
In this organization the retirement of experienced employees leads to the loss of skills	20	30	15	0	0	1.92	0.41
In our organization there is skills acquisition through research	0	0	14	35	16	4.03	0.91
Skills acquisition through research improves how resources are utilized	0	0	16	19	30	4.22	0.96

On the respondent's level of agreement with statements relating to knowledge acquisition on the performance Kenya Tourism Board, it was confirmed that majority of the respondents agreed that skills acquisition through research improves the way resources are utilized as shown by a mean of 4.22. It was established that employees understand the services they provide as shown by a mean of 4.15, employees are able to solve various challenges as shown by a mean of 4.08, employees gain skills through training as shown by a mean of 4.08 and that there are skills acquisition through research in Kenya Tourism Board as shown by a mean of 4.03. The respondents disagreed that the retirement of experienced employees leads to loss of skills as shown by a mean of 1.92. Finally, it was established that knowledge acquisition will enable the employees within the organisation utilize and coordinate the resources in the organization effectively and hence enhance the performance of the organisation. Knowledgeable employees will also relate well with the customers and hence enhance the customer base and thus performance of employees.

The above findings were in line with Stam,(2009) who stated that knowledge acquisition is captured by six factors: Valuing employees attitudes and opinions and encouraging employees to up-skill, having a well-developed financial reporting system; being market focused by actively obtaining customer and industry information, being sensitive to information about changes in the marketplace, employing and retaining a large number of people trained in science, engineering or math, working in partnership with international customers, and getting information from market surveys. The findings were also similar with the findings of Robertson, (2002) who stated that key literatures addressing the role of knowledge and its management in organizational performance are the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm and the knowledge-based view (KBV) of the firm.

Performance

The study sought to find the average number of tourist visiting the country for the last five years and it was found that tourist numbers reached a peak of 1.8 million visitors in 2011 before sliding because of murders and terrorist attacks in 2013 and 2014 that prompted travel restrictions and advisories such as those from England. International tourist arrivals for 2012 were 1.7 million while in 2013 were 1.49 million. International arrivals hit a low of 1.18 million in 2015 compared to 1.35 million in 2014, a 12.6 per cent drop. This shows how badly the industry has been damaged by a spate of Islamist militant attacks that have killed hundreds. It was stated that the Kenya Tourism Board was mandated with the responsibility of marketing Kenya as a tourist destination of choice.

The study sought to establish the average tourism income for the last five years and found out that tourism earnings dropped to Sh 84.6 million in year 2015 as the sector recorded the lowest number of visitors in five years compared to Sh 87.1 billion in 2014 as revealed by the Kenyan Economic Survey 2016 report. This shows how badly the industry has been damaged by a spate of Islamist militant attacks that have killed hundreds. It was revealed that the Kenya Tourism Board was mandated with the responsibility of marketing Kenya as a tourist destination of choice.

On the average number of bed occupancy, it was established that bed occupancy had dropped over the years. In 2011, room revenue had fallen cumulatively by 16% and the KTB reported that Kenya had suffered a 5.3% decline in stay unit nights in 2014. At the same time, occupancy rates have been dwindling since the average occupancy rate for the country was at 55.4% in 2014, down from 59.5% in 2013 and 66.1% in 2011. Based on the opinions of the respondents it was agreed that performance by someone or a group of people in the organization would be achieved when authority and responsibility to reach the organizational goal is exercised without breaking laws and in accordance with moral and ethics.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found out that knowledge identification led to more effective, skilled and competent employees. It was also deduced that the Kenya Tourism Board applied the right skills and knowledge in the right task and the senior managers helped in identifying competent staff in the organization. It was deduced that experienced staff shared and apply the currently available knowledge more effectively and the Kenya Tourism Board identified the skills needed to attain organizational goals. Knowledge identification improved performance of organisation as the identification of the employees with the right skills and competencies enabled the employees to perform tasks with ease and also enhanced their effectiveness. On the correlation analysis between performance of the Kenya Tourism Board and knowledge identification, it was established there was a strong positive correlation as represented by a correlation coefficient of 0.738.

It was confirmed that skills acquisition through research improved the way resources were utilized. It was also established that employees understood the services they provide, employees are able to solve various challenges, employees gain skills through training and that there is skills acquisition through research in Kenya Tourism Board. However, the respondents disagreed that the retirement of experienced employees led to loss of skills. It was established that knowledge acquisition will enable the employees within the organisation utilize and coordinate the resources in the organization effectively and hence enhance the performance of the organisation. The study revealed there was a very strong positive correlation between knowledge acquisition and performance of the Kenya Tourism Board represented by a correlation coefficient of 0.654.

Conclusions

The study concludes that knowledge identification affects the performance of the Kenya Tourism Board and to a great effect. This is because the Kenya Tourism Board identified the skills needed to attain organizational goals, experienced staff needed to apply the available knowledge more effectively and employees applied the right skills and knowledge in the right task. Finally, senior manager's helped in identifying competent staff and knowledge identification led to more effective skilled and competent employees.

The study concludes that knowledge acquisition affected the performance of the Kenya Tourism Board and to a great effect. This was because skills acquisition through research improved the way resources are utilized, employees understand the services they provide, employees are able to solve various challenges, employees gain skills through training and that there is skills acquisition through research in Kenya Tourism Board.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the Kenya Tourism Board in the tourism sector and other organisations should facilitate knowledge identification in order to enhance organisation performance. The organisation should facilitate knowledge identification through conducting seminars and team building where the managers will be able to identify the specific skills of the staffs.

The study recommended that the Kenya Tourism Board in the tourism sector and other organisations should facilitate knowledge acquisition in order to enhance organisation performance. This should be through employee training, focus groups discussions, team building and brain storming where the less skilled and experienced employees will be able to gain experience from the more experienced and competent staffs.

Areas for Further Study

The study sought to determine the effects of knowledge management on the performance in the tourism sector in Kenya using a case of Kenya Tourism Board. It was recommended that further research to be carried out on factors influencing knowledge management in the tourism sector in Kenya.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, A., Ghoneim, S. and Kim, R. (2009). Knowledge management as an enabler of change and innovation in Africa. *International Journal of Technology Management,* Vol. 45.

Aiuah, A., & Tucci, C. L. (2012). Crowd sourcing as a solution to distant search. *Academy of Management Review, 37,* 355-375.

Alexy, O., Criscuolo, P., & Ammon, S. (2012). Managing unsolicited ideas for R&D. *California Management Review*. *54{3,* 116-139.

Alfes, K., Shantz, A.D., Truss, C., and Soane, E.C. (2013). The link between perceived human resource management practices, engagement and employee behaviour: a moderated mediation model. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24*, 330– 351.

Barney, J. (1991). Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive advantage. Journal of Management, 17(1), 99-120.

Bell, E. E. (2010). Letters and Lessons for Teachers. Raleigh, NC: All About Children.

Bloom, P. N., & Chatterji, A. K. (2009). Scaling social entrepreneurial impact. California management review, 51(3), 114-133.

Bock, G. W., et al. (2005). Behavioral Intention Formation in Knowledge Sharing: Examining the Roles of Extrinsic Motivators, Social-psychological Forces and Organizational Climate. MIS quarterly, 87-111.

Brooks, I. (2006). Organizational Behavior: Individuals, Groups and Organization. Essex: Pearson Education Limited

Choi, Y.S. (2005). Critical factors of KM implementation success. Journal of Knowledge Management Practice, 6 (6).

Coad, A. (2009). The growth of firms: A survey of theories and empirical evidence. Edward Elgar Publishing

Cooper, D. R., & Schindler, P. S. (2003). Business Research Methods.

Cooper, H., Hedges, L. V., & Valentine, J. C. (2009). The Handbook of Research Synthesis and Meta-analysis. Russell Sage Foundation.

Denison, D. R. (1990). Corporate culture and organizational effectiveness. John Wiley & Sons.

DuBrin, A. J. (2012). Leadership: Research findings, practice, and skills. Belmont, CA: Cengage South-Western.

Epstein, J. (2010). School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Farashahi, M., Hafso, T. & Molz, R. (2005). Institutionalized norms of conducting research and social realities: a research synthesis of empirical works from 1983 to 2002. International Journal of Management Review, 7, (1), 1-24.

Grant, R. M. (2010). Contemporary strategy analysis and cases: text and cases. John Wiley & Sons.

Hart, S. L., Dowell, G. 2011. A Natural-Resource-Based View of the Firm: Fifteen Years After. Journal of Management 37(5): 1464-1479.

Huckman, R. S., & Staats, B. R. (2011). Fluid tasks and fluid teams: The impact of diversity in experience and team familiarity on team performance. Manufacturing and Service Operations Management, 13, 310-328.

Kandula, S. R. (2006). Performance Management. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India private limited

Kombo, D. K. and Tromp. D. L. A. (2006). *Project and Thesis Writing: an Introduction.* Paulines Publications Africa (Nairobi).

Littlejohn, S. W. (1996). *Theories of human communication*. New York: Wadsworth.

Mahnke, V., Venzin, M., & Zahra, S. (2007). Governing entrepreneurial opportunity recognition in MNEs: Aligning interests and cognition under uncertainty. Journal of Management Studies, 44(7), 1278–1298.

Mugenda, A. G. (2008). *Social science research: Theory and principles.* Nairobi: Applied, ACTS

Mugenda. O., M., &Mugenda., A., M. (2003). Research Methods.

Nath, P., Nachiappan, S., & Ramanathan, R. (2010). The impact of marketing capability, operations capability and diversification strategy on performance: A resource-based view. Industrial Marketing Management, 39(2), 317–329.

Newbert, S., L. (2007). Empirical Research on the ResourceBased View of the Firm: An Assessment and Suggestions for Future Research. Strategic management

Ngechu. (2004). Understanding the research process and methods. An introduction to research methods. Nairobi: Acts Press.

Ogbonna, E. (1993) 'Managing Organizational Culture: Fantasy or Reality?', Human Resource Management Journal, 3(2): 42–54

Okemwa, E. O. and Smith, J. G. (2009). The role of knowledge management in enhancing government service-delivery in Kenya. South African Journal Libs and Info Sci2009, 75(1).

Oliveira, T., & Martins, M. F. (2011). Literature review of information technology adoption models at firm level. The Electronic Journal Information Systems Evaluation, 14(1), 110-121.

Ongore, V., (2011). The relationship between ownership structure and firm performance. An. Empirical analysis of listed companies in Kenya. African Journal of Business Management, Vol 5(6), page 21-28.

Pearce, J.A., Robbins, D.K. and Robinson, R.B. (1987) 'The Impact of Grand Strategy and Planning Formality on Financial Performance', Strategic Management Journal, 8: 125–34. Pendhazur, E.J. (1982) Multiple Regression in Behavioral Research. Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart & Winston

Raduan, C. R., Kumar, N., Haslinda, A. & Ling, G. Y. (2008). Organizational Culture as a Root of Performance Improvement: Research and Recommendations. Contemporary Management Research, 4, (1), 43-56.

Rajender, K. and Kumar, K.P. (2012). Knowledge Management Practices in SME Sector an Empirical Study, *International Journal of Business and Management Tomorrow,* 2 (4), 1-9.

Robbins, S. P. and Sanghi, S. (2007). Organizational Behavior, Pearson Education, New Delhi.

Rogers, E. M., & Shoemaker, F., F. (1971). Communication of Innovations; A Cross-Cultural Approach.

Schein, E. H. (2011). *Leadership and organizational culture.* New York: Wiley.

Schein, E., H. (1992). Organizational culture and Leadership. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Scholz, C. (1987). Corporate Culture and Strategy. The Problem of Strategic fit. *Long Range Planning*, 20(4), 78-87.

Singh, S.K. (2011). Organizational Innovation as Competitive Advantage during Global

Stewart Douglas, (2010). Growing the Corporate Culture; RCRD.

Storey, C. and Kahn, K. B. (2010). The Role of Knowledge Management Strategies and Task Knowledge in Stimulating Service Innovation, *Journal of Service Research*, 13(4), 397- 410

Tan, C. N. L. (2011). Knowledge Management Acceptance: Success Factors amongst Small and Medium-Size Enterprises, *American Journal of Economics and Business Administration*, 3(1), 73-80

Wong, M.C, Yee, C.Y, Ling, C.C, Lin, E.C, Leong, S.C, (2012). Knowledge Management case in Asia/ A case study on the effects of implementing a customer knowledge management system to a public transport corporation. *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management* Vol.4 Issue 2.

Yilmaz, C. & Ergun, E. (2008). Organizational culture and firm effectiveness: An examination of relative effects of culture traits and the balanced culture hypothesis in an emerging economy. *Journal of World Business*, 43, 290–306.

Zheng W., Y& B. & McLean G.N. (2010). Linking Organizational Culture, Structure, Strategy, and Organizational Effectiveness: Mediating Role of Knowledge Management. *Journal of Business Research,* 63, 763–771