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EFFECTS OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FACILITATORS AND MECHANISMS ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge management facilitators and mechanisms play a very important role in helping personnel within the hospitality organizations. Knowledge management facilitators provide 'lubricants' to reduce friction that works against organizations goals while mechanisms are the functional elements that organizations control, for example, procedures that workers follow to produce actions aiming at achievement of the goals and objectives of the hospitality venture. The objectives for the study were; to determine the extent to which knowledge management mechanisms affect organizational performance and to find out the extent to which knowledge management facilitators affect organizational performance. Systems thinking and social capital theories formed the foundations under which the study was conducted. Descriptive and explanatory research designs were used in conducting the research study and analysis. The target population for the study was 756 employees from three selected hotels, where a sample of 254 was obtained for the study. Purposive, proportionate, stratified and systematic random sampling methods were used for the study to realize the objective of the study. Questionnaires were the key tool for data collection. The content validity of the instrument was tested using a pilot testing. Data was obtained from primary and secondary sources for the study. The reliability of the tool was at Cronbach's alpha level of 0.934. Multiple regression analysis results showed that knowledge management facilitators and mechanisms meaningfully affect the performance of hotels at 43.1% and 22.1%, respectively. The conclusions drawn from the study were; knowledge management mechanisms and knowledge management facilitators are the major components that affect performance or organizations. The recommendation from the study was that hotel organizations should heavily invest in their knowledge management facilitators and mechanisms to ensure that the personnel is well equipped to cope with the challenges of performance in their organizations.

KEYWORDS

km mechanisms, knowledge management (KM), KM facilitators, organizational performance.

INTRODUCTION

Many factors drive emphasis in business, which among them are: a progressively refined and challenging markets, deep insights into the roles of businesses, and great comprehension of the knowledge-intensive labour, the thinking, learning, and also the use knowledge, which is referred to as cognitive sciences (Damasio, 1994 and 1999; Schön, 1983; Wiig, 1994; Halpern, 1989; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Klein, 1998;). Managers begin to focus on deliberate and systematic management of knowledge. Knowledge Management (KM) has evolved to form and controls Intellectual Capital (IC) of businesses and peers into organizational management (Wiig, 1994 and 1997; Allee, 1998; Reich, 1991; Böhme and Stehr, 1986).

Knowledge management facilitators, and mechanisms are key components that are substantial in managing hospitality organizations. Intellectual capital assets and knowledge are the main enablers of the performance of organization, for they provide the means to create the proper course of operations, contents of utility in the operations, and quality measures to be used in the operations of the hotel. Facilitators act as 'lubricants' to reduce resistance that function against the actions of the organization. Mechanisms involve the functional components which organizations influence; for instance, the processes used to initiate actions. Organizations focus majorly on mechanisms. The knowledge dimension makes it possible to change the attention to the elements that determine the success of "what" those actions need to be, in essence, what needs to be executed (Wiig, 2000).

King (1999), states that the fundamental of issues in management of knowledge involve the acquisition, clarification, and communication of objective and specific specialized proficiency in ways that are focused and related to an organizational employee who accepts the communication. Therefore, knowledge management (KM) adds to operative manoeuvres and creates competitive benefits over the other players in tourism and hospitality industry. In situations where the verified knowledge in practice is used over and over, knowledge may be advanced in the course of different formal or informal processes which can in turn be assimilated in the operations of the organization (Pyo, Uysal and Chang, 2002).

Robert et al. (2006) observes that today's business operations are dependent on knowledge, where the ability to originate, share and utilize knowledge is a very fundamental driver of employee performance, which in turn results in to company competitive benefit, regional and industrial progression. Knowledge workers are dispersed all over the globe and are networked through the Internet. At times, Intellectual property contests may arise as to whom a given knowledge belong, and the knowledge might be commercialized for individual achievement. Knowledge workforces are constant learners and they are typically involved in application and addition of the acquired stock of knowledge to their individual repositories.

Over time, hospitality employees cultivate specialized work habits, and the most significant challenge in knowledge jobs is to nature effective relationships between these habits. However, hospitality employees often differ on the freedoms at which they are willing to share their knowledge with prospective collaborators. Consequently, there is an essential necessity for scholars to research on the need to use knowledge management for hospitality organizations so as to learn the way in which it is applied, where it should have applied and who should apply the knowledge. Gaining of new expertise by hospitality employees is a continuous

process may hasten the adjustments needed in a hotel and new ways of doing things in the hospitality organization. Establishments need to bring up new products or services, reduce potential business risks, reinvent themselves, and cut down on costs, or face the core challenges in the dynamic commercial environment in which they operate. Although knowledge cannot be locked or picked up in a company's vault, it can never exist in isolation. Many major business organizations comprehend that they succeed because of the expertise and knowledge of their workers, and not that they control any physical asset. Even if they have entered the global market in some commodity, times change and people's needs alter (Watson, 2003).

Technology and innovation are the foundations of modern and knowledge-reliant economic activities. Proposing policies to establish a national innovation mechanism that implies the exchange of information or knowledge among universities, government institutions, and private enterprises is the key avenue to enhance a culture of continuous innovation. Kenyan organizations share skills, utilities, knowledge, and other services; initiation of small and start-up businesses; innovation centres; and manufacturing firms that relies on high-level technologies creating an environment that helps grow a critical mass of companies as well as individual entrepreneurs who will help spur economic growth. These people and enterprises will engage in distinct yet mutually reinforcing activities and processes. (Omar, 2012)

LITERATURE REVIEW

ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

According to Verweire & Lutgart (2004), Performance can be defined in financial terms (e.g., market value, profitability, value-at risk), but it is often used in other environments, such as operations (e.g. Efficiency, effectiveness, number of outputs, throughput-time, product or service quality), marketing (e.g., customer satisfaction, number of customers retained over a certain period), and others organizational performance is defined in terms of the value that an organization creates using its productive assets in comparison with the value that the owners of these assets expect to obtain. If the value that is created is at least as large as the expected value, then it is likely that the owners of these assets will make them available to the organization.

Knowledge Management usage influences individual work performance, along with employee's decision-making productivity. Individuals' joint impact affects the performance of company sections, and the organization as a whole, which sums up into the net benefit of the Knowledge Management Systems within the organization (Jennex and Olfman, 2006).

The benefits that organizations gain due to their KM initiatives have been identified. They comprise increased innovation and growth potential, organizational responsiveness, more efficiency in supply network, organizational internal quality, better decision-making competencies, improved responsiveness to customers, better product and service offerings, as well as enhanced effectiveness of employees, operations and processes resulting in company augmented performance (KPMG 2000; Croteau and Dfouni 2008; Law and Ngai 2008).

Organizational performance is found in multidimensionality of the performance concept. For example, performance can be defined in financial terms (e.g., market value, profitability, value-at-risk), but it is often used in other environments, such as operations (e.g., efficiency, effectiveness, number of outputs, throughput-time, product or service quality), marketing (e.g., customer satisfaction, number of customers retained over a certain period), and others. The performance of an organization is defined in terms of the value that an organization creates using its productive assets in comparison with the value that the owners of these assets expect to obtain. (Verweire & Lutgart, 2004)

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

According to Dalkir, (2005) balanced scorecard method (BSC) is a measurement and management system that enables organizations to clarify their vision and strategy and to translate them into action. It provides feedback on both the internal business processes and external outcomes in order to continuously improve strategic performance and results. The BSC is a conceptual framework for translating an organization's vision into a set of performance indicators distributed among four dimensions: Financial, Customer, Internal Business Processes, and Learning and Growth. Indicators are maintained to measure an organization's progress toward achieving its vision; other indicators are maintained to measure the long-term drivers of success.

Through the BSC, an organization monitors both its current performance (finances, customer satisfaction, and business process results) and its efforts to improve processes, motivate and educate employees, and enhance information systems. The financial dimension typically includes measures such as operating income, return on capital employed, and economic value added. The customer dimension deals with such measures as customer satisfaction, retention, and market share in targeted segments. The internal business process dimension includes measures such as cost, throughput, and quality. The learning and growth dimension addresses measures such as employee satisfaction, retention, and skill sets (Dalkir, 2005).

Financial measures are associated with a number of fundamental weaknesses, including: mitations in their accuracy, neutrality, summarized, and irrelevant due to the accounting period delay. Dominance of result over determinant measures and emphasis on the short term often at the expense of strategic issues; little appreciation of the links and relationships between key areas and aspects of an organization; and an overall lack of balance (Lynch and Cross, 1995; Emmanuel et al, 1990; Fitzgerald et al.,1991; Kaplan and Norton, 1992). Atkinson and Brander-rown (2001) study indicates that the majority of the hotels almost exclusively monitor financial dimensions of performance with little or no attention being paid to non-financial or determinant dimensions.

NONFINANCIAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Several research findings (Harris and Mongiello, 2001; Atkinson and Brander-Brown, 2001) in performance management are advocating an emphasis on both financial and non-financial dimensions such as competitiveness, service quality, customer satisfaction, organizational flexibility, resource utilization, and technology. It is important for performance measures to direct attention to such non-financial factors as service quality and customer satisfaction (Fitzgerald et al., 1991). It is also widely considered essential that an organization's performance measures are linked to its strategic intent, its competitive environment, revenue management, market orientation and service delivery process within hotels (Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Lynch and Cross, 1995; Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Haktanir and Harris, 2005).

Furthermore, there has been an increasing recognition within the hotel industry of the importance and value of people; employees as well as guests in the service delivery process, which has led to suggestions that hotels need to develop better performance information relating to such key areas as employee morale and employee satisfaction (Fwaya, 2006; Fitzgerald et al., 1991). In addition, Harris and Mongiello (2001) argue that even though a hotel is thought of in a service context, in reality it encompasses three different types of industrial activity (rooms, beverage, and food) that exhibit different business orientations. These three orientations call for a diverse set of performance indicators. Chan (2004) reported on the use of non-financial measures in the balanced scorecard as a performance management system to support reporting on various management activities. Based on the literature, the non-financial measures used in this study are competitiveness, quality of service, innovation, community social responsibility, supplier performance, resource utilization, and flexibility.

Ottenbacher (2007) identifies other three performance dimensions: market performance, financial performance, employee, and customer relationship enhancement. These dimensions can be operationalized by using the following indicators: market share, attracted new customers, profitability, cost efficiencies, total sales, positive employee feedback, competencies of employees, as well as customer satisfaction. Abdel-Maksoud et al (2005) suggested a model involving five non-financial performance measures: customer satisfaction, product quality, on-time delivery, efficiency and utilization and employee morale.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

In every profession and occupation, there are so-called "tools of the trade" that are associated with everyday practice. In accounting and financial services there are spreadsheets, and in construction critical path analyses, to support the practices of professional workers. However, knowledge work also employs a range of tools that facilitate the integration of skills and expertise across a range of different practices. Those tools allow knowledge work participants – individually or collectively, and in single or diverse employment settings – to combine separate pools of knowledge to accomplish knowledge work. Knowledge work tools are the means by which diversely trained knowledge workers communicate and collaborate across the specialized boundaries of their separate practices. (Robert et al, 2006)

Consequently, hotels have to save experiences, which should not be lost, when employees leave the hotel or rotate between hotels. They also need to support unskilled workers and new employees with other employees' experiences, build up easily understandable standards and foster learning. Hotels can particularly benefit from a knowledge management system, which helps to transfer and save knowledge within the hotel and supports the staffs' service interactions. Hence,

knowledge management, which has recently emerged as a means of improving business performance (Spender, 1994; Teece, 1984), needs to be implemented and improved regarding the specific requirements in hotels. Knowledge management must help to identify, generate, accumulate, save, retrieve, and distribute knowledge to contribute towards improving company-wide service quality. Nevertheless, knowledge management in hotels can benefit from the service encounter that offers the possibility to achieve knowledge directly about existing and changing customer expectations (Ricarda, 2002).

The implementation of knowledge management requires a systemic knowledge orientated adaptation of hard and soft factors in hotels. Soft factors generally include openness, trust, respect, frames of reference, values, beliefs, an orientation toward continuous development and expanded personal communication (Lyles, 1994: 461). Hard factors fostering the acquisition, retrieval and storing of internal and external knowledge can contain databases, libraries, communication technologies and seminars or organizational structures. Both factors influence service quality, while service includes "a package of implicit and explicit benefits performed within a supporting facility and using facilitating goods. (Ricarda, 2002).

According to Thampi, (2008) The use of information technologies within an organization have been identified, by many companies, as an important tool for managing or sharing organizational knowledge in order to improve business performance. The value of knowledge to an organization is improved with the growing support and implementation of knowledge management systems. Knowledge management systems are designed to help organizations capture, codify, store, and dissemination organizational knowledge. Knowledge management systems come in many forms such as expert systems and knowledge management portals. All knowledge management systems, however, must have safeguards in place for protecting an organization's knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FACILITATORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The intensive use of knowledge in the process of service production and the vast amounts of information connected with the numerous and varying cooperative and competitive relations handled with modern IT-equipment put the hospitality industry close to the New Economy, even though it is part of the Old Economy. The intensive use of knowledge or information is the main feature of all the recent industries, so we may subsume the hospitality industry here, because today this industry is in many ways knowledge-based. (Kahle 2002)

Kahle (2002), comments that organizations exist and develop by communication. Organizational communication enhances proceeds from a concept in which the communication of managers is the organization. In this view communication includes the unsaid, but obvious, which is the most important aspect. Those items and relations which are so obvious that nobody mentions them but everybody is taking them for granted as necessary. Underlying assumptions of own decisions and actions are the core assumptions and values of an organization. These basic values and assumptions have been addressed as the basis of organizational culture (Schein, 1997: 16) that assists in knowledge management. Hotels can improve their service quality by enhancing employees' knowledge about customer's preferences and the corresponding service procedures. Service quality depends strongly on the ability of hotels to acquire, to develop, to accumulate and to distribute knowledge assets. (Ricarda, 2002) As a consequence of knowledge management, Successful organizations concentrate their efforts on a particular area and excel at it, rather than trying to be all things to all people and failing to excel at anything. Customer intimacy, product leadership and operational excellence are value disciplines that reflect the fact that 'value' is determined as a tradeoff between convenience, quality and price. It is the inherent tension between these three qualities of a product that makes it necessary for an organization to focus on excelling at just one of them (Kingston & Haggie, 1999).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

SYSTEM THINKING THEORY

Knowledge management is recognized as a cross-functional and multifaceted discipline. Various components make up knowledge management and the understanding of their interaction is important; a holistic view is very useful (Ndlela and Toit, 2001). To this end, the relationships among knowledge enablers, facilitators, mechanisms, drivers and organizational performance should be identified within the framework of systems thinking. Systems thinking theory considers problems in their entirety (Rubenstein-Montano et al, 2001; Senge, 1990). Problem solving in this way includes pattern finding to enhance understanding of, and responsiveness to, the problem. System thinking theory examines relationships between the various parts of the system. It is championed on the premise that there are emergent properties of systems that do not subsist when systems are decoupled into smaller parts (Senge, 1990).

This theory is better able to describe complex and dynamic characteristics of knowledge management in a systematic way. For example, the people (the knowledge people create, share, and use), the culture for knowledge sharing, organizational structure, and the technological infrastructure for knowledge management should be all be considered for effective knowledge management. This approach to knowledge management emphasized the concern raised by Tsoukas (1996) regarding the lack of an integrative framework in organizations to provide a general sense of direction for knowledge management. Furthermore, systems thinking theory is important for knowledge management because the theory can ensure that the same important components are addressed and compared by knowledge management endeavors (Schlange, 1995). Therefore, the knowledge management mechanisms and facilitators that enable successful performance of organizations is based on this systems thinking theory. It provides systematic mechanisms for how knowledge management mechanisms and facilitators can improve organizational performance and for studying connections between knowledge management processes and organizational performance

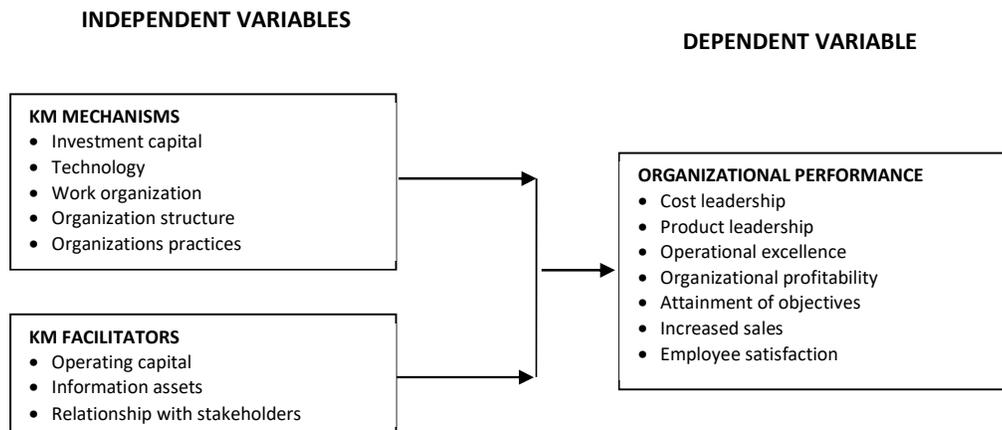
INPUT-PROCESS-OUTPUT MODEL

The research focus is on the knowledge enablers, facilitators, mechanisms and drivers with organizational performance by elaborating on the significance of knowledge processes as the foundation of organizational advantage (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). The relationship among these three components is nothing new; it can be found in the input-process-output model by Hackerman and Morris (1978). The input-process-output model is one of the most pervasive of all conceptual devices in business context. The model assumes that the input factors affect output performances through certain kinds of interaction processes. It focuses on how resources (inputs) are converted (processed) into products (outputs). The input-process-output model is still useful today, and can provide integrative view for relationships among knowledge components.

From the literature reviewed, the relationship among the study variables can be summarized as shown in figure 1.1 below.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

FIGURE 1.1: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Source: adopted from Wiig, (2000)

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Many hospitality establishments in Kenya may have knowledge management infrastructure but they may not know the factors that come in to play to make effective use of the knowledge in the domains of the stakeholders involved. There seemed to be no previously studies on the effect of knowledge management mechanisms and facilitators on the performance of hospitality organization. Therefore, this research was necessary to investigate the extent to which the organizations performance may improve or decline when the factors that facilitate the utilization of the available knowledge with the employees of an establishment were taken in to account. Many people in the industry have knowledge that if well managed, may improve the performance of an organization through its productivity. It is important to the managers to help them in situations where they are evaluating the possibility for having an infrastructure for managing knowledge within their hospitality organizations. This is in the plight of the fact that many people in the hospitality industry are knowledge repositories by themselves, and the knowledge they possess is a very significant asset for the success of hospitality organizations. When that knowledge is tapped in to the organization, then the performance of that organization is inclined to improvement. Therefore, this research was geared towards finding the extent to which the performance of the organizations can improve.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The key elements in the application and development of knowledge are speed and flexibility in a rapidly changing environment. At the same time the efficiency of knowledge-intensive core processes must be increased to meet the demands of cost reduction. It is therefore not only a matter of applying the right knowledge in the right place at the right time, but it must also be done at a minimal cost. This is a continuous process. Internal and external learning experiences are continually being transformed into new knowledge assets and existing knowledge is being modified. Organisations that are not capable of doing this develop all kinds of bottlenecks which often have far-reaching consequences (Spek and Andre, 2005).

The world keeps on changing. Organizations are exposed to a rapid succession of changes influenced by technology, science, and politics. Customers are becoming increasingly demanding when it comes to flexibility, speed and quality. Markets are changing, and international competition is increasing. Old rules disappear and new ones come into force. It's not easy to keep up with all the developments, let alone to take the lead (Spek and André, 2005). Therefore, it is for this reason that many organizations feel obliged to make changes in the way they run their business just to keep up. Terms such as Business Process Re-engineering (BPR), process rationalization, Total Quality Management (TQM) and 'the learning organization' have become commonplace. Organizations have to fit in to a constantly changing environment and they need knowledge that can be rapidly accessed and applied to enable the organization cope with the demands of the dynamic business environment. This must be facilitated by the factors that enhance the practice of sharing of knowledge within an organization.

Hospitality organizations must have a knowledge management infrastructure in place that helps them deliver satisfactory service to the customers, so that they secure repeat business for the establishment. With the infrastructure, some factors enable the employees and managers of the establishments to utilize it effectively in order to reap the benefits of a performing organization. The hotel managers may not understand some of these factors and the key roles they play within an organization. For instance, the managers of hotels may be interested in capturing the knowledge possessed by some of its employees. They may not do this well so as to preserve the knowledge for future needs in case the current employee left the organization. However, when they act in the light of the factors that facilitate the performance within the hotel, they might improve the performance and be in a position to grow. Thus, this study sought to find out the extent to which the knowledge management mechanisms and facilitators help in the performance of hospitality establishments.

OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the extent to which knowledge management mechanisms affect organizational performance
2. To find out the extent to which knowledge management facilitators affect organizational performance

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- Ho₁ Knowledge management mechanisms do not affect organizational performance
- Ho₂ Knowledge management facilitators do not affect organizational performance

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was undertaken in Nairobi city. The study employed an explanatory and descriptive research designs. The researcher selected one hotel that has been in operations for over twenty years, another that has been operational for fifteen years, and the other that has operated for less than five years to ensure that the knowledge management facilitators and mechanisms under study cut across the time to avoid biases. 756 employees of three selected hotels were the target population. 254 respondents participated in the study. Purposive, proportionate stratified and systematic random sampling procedures were used. Primary and secondary data sources were used to obtain data. 254 structured questionnaires were administered to hotel employees. Reliability was measured using the Cronbach's Alpha at a level of 0.7%. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0. Descriptive and inferential statistics were derived. Multiple regression was used to explain the relationship between the organisational performance and the knowledge management mechanisms and facilitators. The regression model was given as:

$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \mu$ Where; Y_i = Organisational performance X_1 = knowledge management mechanisms X_2 = knowledge management facilitators, β_0 = Constant term, β_1, β_2 = Coefficients of the Regression and μ = Error term.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Inferential statistics are used in generalizing from a sample to a wider population, and in testing hypotheses, i.e. deciding whether the data is consistent with the research prediction.

From the results of the analysis, the following regression model was obtained:

$\hat{Y}_i = 1.461 + 0.220X_{1i} + 0.437X_{2i} + \mu$

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

From the results of the analysis, the hypothesis that knowledge management mechanisms do not affect organizational performance was rejected ($t=3.569, p=0.000$) and knowledge management facilitators do not affect organizational performance was also rejected ($t=7.049, p=0.000$). These results are as shown in table 1 below.

The summary of the outcomes as in table 1 below was:

HO₁ Knowledge management mechanisms do not affect organizational performance was rejected

HO₂ Knowledge management facilitators do not affect organizational performance was rejected

TABLE 1: REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.461	.280			5.222	.000					
KM MECHANISMS	.167	.047	.220		3.569	.000	.384	.240	.200	.832	1.202
KM FACILITATORS	.427	.061	.437		7.049	.000	.533	.438	.396	.820	1.219

a. Dependent Variable: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Source: (Research data, 2017)

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Knowledge management mechanisms variables were analyzed through factor analysis and also by regression. In factor analysis, the variables were reduced to three components which are: organizational knowledge management practices, employee knowledge management practices and knowledge management investments. The knowledge management investments can be equated to the tools of trade as the results of this study revealed that they need to be manipulated. According to Robert et al, (2006), in every profession and occupation, there are so-called "tools of the trade" that are associated with everyday practice. In accounting and financial services there are spreadsheets, and in construction critical path analyses, to support the practices of professional workers. Knowledge work tools are the means by which diversely trained knowledge workers communicate and collaborate across the specialized boundaries of their separate practices.

The findings of the analysis of this research reduced the variables to incorporate the aspects that precisely explain the hotel knowledge management practices that help the hospitality organizations in their performance. The results are consistent with findings of Ricarda, (2002) who asserts that hotels have to save experiences, which should not be lost, when employees leave the hotel or rotate between hotels. Knowledge management, which has recently emerged as a means of improving business performance (Spender, 1994; Teece, 1984), needs to be implemented and improved regarding the specific requirements in hotels. Knowledge management must help to identify, generate, accumulate, save, retrieve, and distribute knowledge to contribute towards improving company-wide service quality. When regression analysis was done, the correlation between knowledge management mechanisms was found to be at 0.384. This meant that there is a positive relationship between the knowledge management mechanisms and the performance of hospitality firms. The researcher thus was able to arrive at the understanding that knowledge management mechanisms do affect organizational performance and therefore, this led to the rejection of null hypothesis that stated that Knowledge management mechanisms do not affect organizational performance.

The findings of the study were that hard and soft factors of knowledge management practices affect the performance of organizations. In this regard, Lyles, (1994: 461) states that the implementation of knowledge management requires a systemic knowledge orientated adaptation of hard and soft factors in hotels. Soft factors generally include openness, trust, respect, frames of reference, values, beliefs, an orientation toward continuous development and expanded personal communication. As found out in the analysis of the data, these are some of the employee knowledge management aspects that facilitate the contribution of the employees to the overall performance of the organizations

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FACILITATORS ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The researcher was interested in finding out the extent to which knowledge management facilitators predict performance of hospitality organizations. Being the "lubricants" that reduce frictions against actions, (Wiig, 2000) the knowledge management facilitators have a very important contribution towards the performance of hospitality establishments. The data was subjected to factor analysis where the variables were reduced to two components namely; personnel facilitator factors and organizational facilitator factors. Personnel facilitator factors are the ones where the employees are involved in contribution towards realization of achievement of organizational objectives while organizational facilitator factors are the ones where the hospitality firms are involved in realizing the achievement of the goals of the organization. These findings were in agreement with the findings of Kahle (2002), who comments that organizations exist and develop by communication. Organizational communication enhances proceeds from a concept in which the communication of managers is the organization. In this view communication includes the unsaid, but obvious, which is the most important aspect. Hotels can improve their service quality by enhancing employees' knowledge about customer's preferences and the corresponding service procedures. Service quality depends strongly on the ability of hotels to acquire, to develop, to accumulate and to distribute knowledge assets.

The results of the findings of the study revealed that there is a positive correlation between knowledge management facilitators and organizational performance of the hospitality firms in the hotel industry. The regression results showed a correlation at the level of $p < 0.05$. This also led to the rejection of the null hypothesis that postulates that *knowledge management facilitators do not affect the performance of hotel organizations*. To complement the findings, Ricarda, (2002) declares that as a consequence of knowledge management, Successful organizations concentrate their efforts on a particular area and excel at it, rather than trying to be all things to all people and failing to excel at anything. So, knowledge management facilitators may result to Customer intimacy, product leadership and operational excellence which are value disciplines that reflect the fact that 'value' is determined as a tradeoff between convenience, quality and price. It is the inherent tension between these three qualities of a product that makes it necessary for an organization to focus on excelling at just one of them (Kingston & Haggie, 1999). This ultimately leads to the hotel performance.

FINDINGS

This study was guided by the specific objectives that involved an investigation in to the extent to which knowledge management facilitators and mechanisms influenced the performance of hospitality organizations. The study initially hypothesized that knowledge management facilitators and mechanisms do not affect the performance of hospitality organizations, which were subjected to statistical analysis to establish the nature of relationship amongst them. From the findings of the study, the null hypotheses were rejected and the alternative hypothesis adopted. This is illustrated in the table 2 below.

TABLE 2: SUMMARY RESULTS OF HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis	Statement	Results
HO ₁	Knowledge management mechanisms do not affect organizational performance	Rejected
HO ₂	Knowledge management facilitators do not affect organizational performance	Rejected

Source: (Research data, 2017)

RECOMMENDATIONS

After the hypotheses in this study were subjected to analysis and conclusions arrived at, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

1. The hospitality organizations need to find out the personnel based factors that drive the success of the operations in the organization and develop them for the better of the organization.
2. The hospitality should invest in assets that facilitate sharing of knowledge within the organization, For instance, the investment in information technology to boost the performance in the operations of the hotel.
3. The organization should come up with learning programs that will help in personnel growth and development.

The organization should conduct regular evaluation of its capabilities to discover the areas of deficiency so as to take corrective actions to ensure that there is constant improvement and growth.

CONCLUSIONS

The first conclusion is about knowledge management mechanisms which have a positive effect on the performance of hospitality organizations. When hospitality organizations invest in infrastructure that facilitates the operations of the organization, for instance; investment in technology, the performance of the organization is likely to improve. Employees use these mechanisms to do the work that result to performance of their organization. This was confirmed by the correlation between the knowledge management mechanisms on the performance of organizations.

The second conclusion is that knowledge management facilitators positively affect the performance of the hospitality organizations. The correlation results showed that there is a relationship between the performance of the hotels and their relationship with the stakeholders, the information they handle and the operating capital of the organizations.

Generally, it was concluded that knowledge management facilitators and mechanisms affect the performance of the hotel organization. Therefore, the managers of the hospitality firms need to understand what other factors besides these highlighted in this study affect the performance of hospitality organizations and they invest on them so as to ensure that they are constantly relevant in the dynamic business world.

LIMITATIONS

- a) Finances -The study was limited to selected hospitality establishments in Nairobi city in order to reduce costs on transport and accommodation that could emanate from inclusion of a wider study area.
- b) There is inadequate literature on Knowledge management enablers, drivers, mechanisms and facilitators that affect organization's performance in relation to the hospitality industry, especially in the Kenyan context.
- c) The study was limited to five star hotels which had working KM systems.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The further research can be conducted on the following topics:

1. Factors affecting knowledge management in the hospitality industry.
2. Knowledge management as a tool for organizational performance.

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