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Investigation of the Key Internal Factors Influencing Knowledge Management, Employment, and Organisational Performance: A Qualitative Study of the UAE Hospitality Sector

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This paper uses qualitative research to examine the impact of internal organisational factors on knowledge management and organisational performance in the hospitality sector in the UAE. These internal factors are organisational culture, structure, strategy, knowledge sharing and information technology. The primary research data is collected using personal interviews with upper and middle-level managers working in UAE hotels. The analysis process for the primary data goes through many steps, starting from conducting the interviews, transcription of the interviews' discussions, creating the codes for the study constructs, coding the discussions' outputs by meaning then allocating elicited items to the study themes, and finally making the frequencies for the chosen expressions. The study found that organisational strategy, structure and culture, knowledge sharing, and information technology influence knowledge management employment positively. Besides, the results showed that knowledge management affects the organisation's performance positively.

Key words: *Knowledge management, Organisational performance, Organisational culture, Organisational structure, Organisational strategy, Knowledge sharing, Information technology.*

Introduction

Knowledge management (KM) is an organisational process that aims to locate, create, and share information and knowledge. KM plays an essential role in many administrative activities involving solving problems and coming up with new ideas and strategies (Al-Emran et al., 2020; Salloum et al., 2018). KM can benefit firms in a number of ways: as a tool for generating profit; a means for recognising and utilising the true value of human resources as a KM producer (Ammari et al., 2017; Zu'bi et al., 2012); and a way to help the company remain competitive in the market (Baker & Baker, 2001). Jain and Moreno (2015) argue that KM is a complex concept because of its inherent intangibility and reliance on human perception. Thus, this study sets out to examine the impact of various internal factors on KM and the effect that KM has on organisational performance. This study relies on qualitative research data collected using personal interviews conducted with 13 upper and middle-level managers working in the UAE hospitality sector.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

RQ1. What are the main internal factors affecting KM?
RQ2. Does KM affect organisational performance?

Research Important and Objectives

This paper will benefit the research of the hospitality sector by examining the internal factors affecting the use of KM and firm performance in the UAE. Many literature reviews show the efficacy of KM in different fields such as information technology (Chuang et al., 2013), manufacturing and services firms (Joshi & Chawla, 2019), and human resource organisations (Zheng et al., 2010). However, there is a noticeable lack of qualitative studies examining the internal organisational drivers affecting KM and analysing how KM affects organisational performance, especially in the hospitality industry. Big data, KM, information knowledge, and knowledge sharing are essential tools that can easily provide organisations utilising them with a significant competitive advantage (Al-Dmour et al., 2014; Alhashmi, Alshuriden, et al., 2020; Alhashmi, Salloum, et al., 2020; Alshurideh, Alsharari, et al., 2019; Alshurideh, Al Kurdi, & Salloum, 2019; Alshurideh, Salloum, Al Kurdi, Monem, et al., 2019; Salloum et al., 2020a, 2020b). Jain & Moreno (2015) believe KM to be the reason behind economic growth; according to them, if all parties within an organisation effectively use KM, its goals and objectives will be easier to reach.

This research aims to identify the number of significant KM drivers and the ways in which they affect organisational performance. These KM drivers often result in improved operational efficiency, effectiveness, and customer satisfaction. Overall, this research aims to:

1. Analyse the impact of internal organisational factors (culture, structure, strategy, knowledge sharing, and information technology) on KM.
2. Analyse and evaluate the effects of KM practices on organisational performance in the UAE hotel industry.

Literature Review

Organisational Culture

Organisational culture (OC) refers to a set of common values and behaviours shared by employees in an organisation. OC encompasses organisational philosophy, experiences, expectations, and shared values. Needle (2010) defines OC as an organisation's vision, mission, beliefs, language, and assumptions.

Jain and Moreno's (2015) research emphasises the importance of a strong learning OC. This is reiterated by Chuang et al. (2013), who define OC as an essential factor in any successful organisation – one that is fostered by encouraging people to share knowledge. Giampaoli et al. (2017) highlight the role of OC in creating useful problem-solving knowledge, and Valmohammadi and Ahmadi (2015) argue for the importance of a friendly OC that is built on trust and the sharing of knowledge. Overall, the effect of OC on organisational performance can be simplified to the following proposition:

P1: OC contributes to the employment of KM within an organisation.

Organisational Structure

Early definitions of organisational structure (OST) focus on the way in which organisations assign their employees to different tasks and coordinate them to achieve various objectives (Mintzberg, 1993). Mosconi and Roy (2013) define OST as the distribution of roles and duties between employees to support the sharing of knowledge about daily activities and decisions, while Weber (2019) sees it as a set of organisational operations and practices. Lee and Choi (2003) consider OST to be one of the facilitators for KM's success. According to Joshi and Chawla (2019), there are two types of OST: the centralised OST, where the top management is responsible for making decisions, and the decentralised STR, which emphasises employee satisfaction and motivation. Zaied (2012) stresses the importance of having an OST that can accommodate change. As a result, the effects of STR can be reformulated as follows:

P2: OST contributes to the employment of KM within an organisation.

Organisational Strategy

Organisational strategy (STR) can be defined as a set of activities taking place in an organisation (Harlow, 2017). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) define it as an organisational intention to foster knowledge creation, while Pearce et al. (2000) describe it as the process of using of available resources to achieve specific short and long-term goals. Hashim (2015) points out that efficient STRs help companies survive in volatile and competitive economies. This is reverberated by Habtoor et al. (2018), who define STR as a set of actions designed to help an organisation reach its goals and gain competitive advantage. Competitive advantage, in turn, can also be reached through the employment and adjustment of KM systems and applications (Aburayya, Alshurideh, Albqaeen, Alawadhi, & Al A'yadeh, 2020; Al Kurdi, Alshurideh, & Al afaishata, 2020; Alshurideh et al., 2017; Kurdi, Alshurideh, & Alnaser, 2020; Shannak et al., 2012). Valmohammadi and Ahmadi (2015) advise company leaders to add KM to their STRs; thus, the effects of STR can be described as follows:

P3: STR contributes to the employment of KM within an organisation.

Organisational Knowledge Sharing

Lee et al. (2005) define knowledge sharing (KS) as a process that supports the diffusion of knowledge among workers, eventually contributing to their achievements. According to Darroch and McNaughton (2002), KS takes place when an organisation encourages its workers to share their ideas and experiences, generating new suggestions and opportunities. KS can be divided into two categories: the explicit (process, formula, and routine) and the tacit KS (experience and know-how) (Wang et al., 2014). Van Den Hooff and De Ridder (2004) identify KS as a way of transforming and establishing knowledge, while Massaro et al. (2014) show the importance of preparing for and fostering KS in an organisation. Consequently, the effects of KS are as follows:

P4: KS contributes to the employment of KM within an organisation.

Information Technology

Information technology (IT) is one of the key internal factors affecting KM. Davenport and Prusak (1998) as well as Tseng (2008) define IT as a tool for managing and storing knowledge and information to support an organisation's operations. IT can also be described as a way of establishing connections between people using various applications such as email, chatrooms, video conferences, and social media (Borghoff & Pareschi, 1997). The main IT- related issue concerns the difficulty of receiving and managing valuable organisational knowledge using IT

assets. Iyengar et al. (2015) point out that most influential companies gain a significant competitive advantage by investing massive amounts of money in IT. The best way to adopt IT as a part of KM is to have an awareness of its limitations (Borghoff & Pareschi, 1997). As a result, the effects of IT can be summarised as follows:

P5: IT contributes to the employment of KM within an organisation.

Knowledge Management

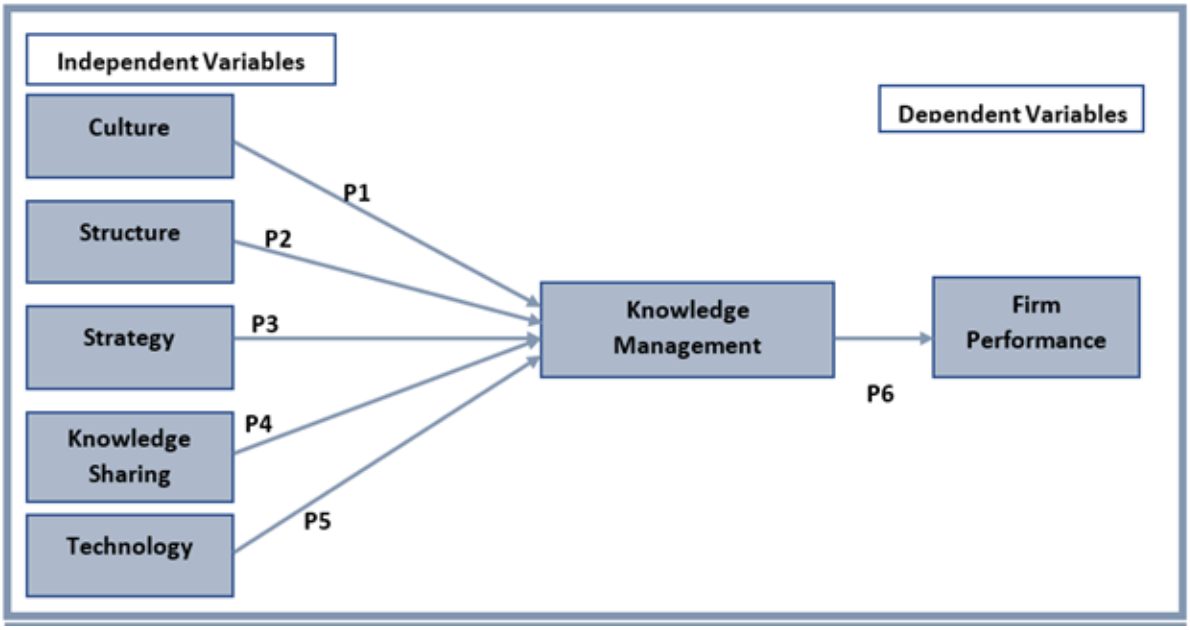
KM is an essential tool for any organisation. Iandoli et al. (2007) define it as a collection of management practices and techniques used by an organisation to distribute information, expertise, and intellectual capital among its workers. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) contend that successful KM must not only make internalised tacit knowledge explicit, but also share systematic and technical information.

Individuals adopt and apply knowledge once they acquire it from the KM system. Alavi and Leidner (2001) portray KM as a mix of processes and practices that help an organisation receive knowledge-based competitive advantages. KM success factors can be divided into four categories: human-oriented, organisation-oriented, IT-oriented, and management-processes-orientated ones (Heisig, 2009). However, academics and practitioners look at KM as a concept that comprises three main activities, which are knowledge acquisition, knowledge dissemination, and responsiveness to knowledge (Darroch & McNaughton, 2003). Jain and Moreno (2015) used organisation learning to investigate the relationship between KM, firm performance, and a number of other factors (collaboration, teamwork, freedom, reward, and recognition), highlighting the positive effects of KM. Magnier-Watanabe and Benton (2017) explore the roles of implicit and explicit knowledge in converting management innovation into enhanced firm performance (FP). Yu et al. (2019) focus on decision quality as a primary administrative process that affects KM and FP.

Organisational Performance

Organisational performance (OP) refers to the extent to which a group of workers achieve their objectives. OP can thus be assessed by looking at the employees' achievements. Earlier studies define the concept as an ability to achieve organisational targets (Sloma, 1999); Ivancevich et al. (1977) define it as the fulfilment of work objectives. Newer studies use organisational effectiveness, productivity, profitability, quality, continuous improvement, work quality, and social responsibility as leading performance indicators (Bolat & Yilmaz, 2009).

Figure 1. *The Proposed Research Model*



Jain and Moreno (2015) assess OP in two ways, first focusing on an organisation's financial performance and then on its knowledge creation capacity. Migdadi (2009) highlights the importance of creating roles, distributing duties, and organising work practices, all of which can improve OP. Overall, the effects of OP are can be described as follows:

P6: Employment of KM within a company enhances OP.

Research Model

The study model depicted in Figure 1 explains the proposed links among the study constructs.

Methodology

This qualitative research collected primary data via semi-structured face-to-face interviews conducted with the help of the summative approach. This approach involves the researcher developing and creating keywords and terms (Alhashmi et al., 2020; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). 13 personal interviews were conducted to collect the data; this method was chosen because of convenience and time constraints.

The researchers targeted and contacted the participants via telephone and prepared memorandums, interview questions, and recording permission forms. Overall, 13 personal interviews with upper and middle-level managers were conducted in three hotels in the UAE.

Personal Interviews

Lasting between 30 and 45 minutes, the 13 interviews were held in hotel conference rooms, which were quiet and well lit. The equipment used included a laptop, two recorders, and the required forms; moreover, the moderators asked the hotels' restaurants to provide participants with drinks and snacks. The interviews started with an ice-breaking discussion of the hotel industry and the managers' experiences in the hospitality sector. Afterwards, the managers had to answer several demographic questions and sign a recording permission form. The main questions were divided into two sections: the first part comprised general questions about the hospitality sector, while the second part contained 18 questions used to identify the factors influencing KM in the UAE hospitality sector. The list of questions can be found in Table 1. Then, the interviewers started asking questions directly relevant to the topic. Any unfamiliar concepts were explained, and the interviewees could stop the interview at any moment in case of confusion. The participants were highly enthusiastic and offered further help.

The participants were aged between 30 and 45 years. Approximately 62% were male, and the rest were female. The interviewees' average length of experience was between five and ten years; all are educated managers possessing bachelor's and master's degrees.

Table 1: *Research Question*

Dimension	Theoretical Definition	Operation Definition	Final Interview Question
General Question		**1. Could you tell us about your experience in the hospitality sector?**	
Organization Culture	The organization's vision, mission, beliefs, language, and assumptions. The way the group interacts and deals with each other, clients, and stakeholders defined as organization culture by (Needle, 2010) (Schrodt, 2002).	• Employees understand the importance of knowledge. • Employees are valued for their expertise. • The benefits of sharing knowledge outweigh the costs. (Gold, Malhotra, & Segars, 2001)	• What does culture mean to you? • Can you describe the culture of your organization? • How does organizational culture affect knowledge management in your organization? • Does your organization promote innovative ideas, trust, and openness?
Organization Structure	The way that the organization divided the human resources into the different tasks and coordinate between then to achieve the organization's goals and objectives (Mintzberg, 1993)	• Our company structure facilitates the discovery of new knowledge. • Our company structure facilitates the creation of new knowledge. • Our company structure facilitates knowledge sharing. (Gold et al., 2001)	• Can you please talk about your organization structure? • Do you think the current organization structure is compatible with the pursuance of knowledge management?
Organization Strategy	a group of actions designed to help the organization to reach its goals and objectives can also lead to competitive advantage (Habtoor et al., 2018)	• Knowledge (know-how, technical skill, or problem-solving methods) is well codified in your company. • Knowledge can be acquired easily through formal documents and manuals in your company. • Results of projects and meetings should be documented in your company. • Knowledge is shared through codified forms like manuals or documents in your company. • My knowledge can be easily acquired from experts and co-workers in your company (López-Nicolás & Meroño-Cerdán, 2011)	• How would you describe "your organization strategy"? • Is knowledge management aligned with the overall organization strategy? why? • Are your strategic management practices in your organization supportive of knowledge management?
Knowledge Sharing	A process that supports the knowledge diffusion between workers that leads to improving the work and accomplishment of the requirements (Lee et al., 2005)	• My firm has capability to transfer relevant knowledge to employees. • My firm has capability to distribute relevant knowledge throughout the organization. • My firm has capability to share relevant knowledge among business units. (Wu & Chen, 2014)	• What is your opinion about knowledge sharing? • How do you usually share the knowledge in your organization? • How your organization generates knowledge?
Information Technology	defined information Technology as a tool that, able to manage and store knowledge and information in the organization documents to support the organization **(Davenport & Prusak, 1998)**	• Our company uses information technology in internal communication throughout the organization • Our company uses information technology to communicate with external stakeholders • Our company uses information technology to collect business • knowledge related to its competitors, customers and operating (Hussinki, Ritala, Vanhala, & Kianto, 2017)	• Can you please describe to what level your organization care about technology? • How does technology in your organization facilitate knowledge management? • How do you keep your technology skills current?
Knowledge management	A collection of management practices and techniques used by the organization to distribute the information, know-how the expertise, and intellectual capital within the organization use and reuse the knowledge (Iandoli et al., 2007).	• My firm has capability to develop knowledge from internal knowledge workers. • My firm has capability to codify acquired knowledge into accessible and applicable formats. • My firm has capability to store acquired knowledge into organizational knowledge repository (Wu & Chen, 2014).	• How your management support the knowledge management?
Firm performance	Performance as a work fulfilment, accomplished objectives, and personal change; at the gathering level. Besides, it alludes to assurance, cohesion, efficiency, and profitability. At the sound level, it is about benefit, proficiency, efficiency, non-appearance rate, turnover rate, and versatility (Ivancevich et al., 1977).	• is more successful. Lee and • has a greater market share. • is growing faster. • is more profitable. • is more innovative. (H. Lee & Choi, 2003)	• How you measure your organization performance • How Knowledge management affect firm performance?

Analysis

The process of analysing primary data for a study of this kind is commonly used by scholars (Al Kurdi, 2016; Alshurideh, 2013; Ghannajeh et al., 2015). The analysis was conducted in six steps, described below.

1. **Data review**. Before coding the factors, the researchers must collect data to be revised by a second scholar, who is responsible for reviewing the interview findings and notes. Another instructor looks at the findings, which contain terms, definitions, concepts, and transcripts. This step is crucial for checking available extractions for the factors related to the study and validating the research data (Saunders et al., 2013).
2. **Coding process and coding guide**. The coding process refers to the step that requires the researchers to choose between two and three letters to signify each factor. The study factors have been coded as illustrated in Table 2 (Saunders et al., 2013).
3. **Organising data**. In this stage, all the transcripts are organised according to the codes and then grouped depending on the relevant constructs. Some responses are related to several factors at once; in these cases, it helps to keep the elicited statements related to the study's constructs and remove any unneeded ones. This stage is essential for tracing the links between the themes of the study with the relevant theoretical constructs (Alshurideh, 2013; Saunders et al., 2013).
4. **Categorising data**. In this stage, the responses are distributed to various categories. Every response is placed into one of the main sub-themes. These steps are called coding design or coding process and subsequently help to analyse each factor (Alshurideh, 2013; Saunders et al., 2013).
5. **Interpreting data**. The researchers call this step 'the explanation stage', since this is when the researcher's group and link all the selected statements and sub-themes together. This stage serves to group the responses illustrating different participants' views and start connecting the relevant links between the collected pieces of data. Moreover, establishing relationships between various factors can highlight alternative responses. Finally, this step is useful for evaluating the quantity and quality of the collected data (Alshurideh, 2013; Saunders et al., 2013).
6. **Creating construct elements**. This stage revolves around the creation of final construct elements. In this stage, the researchers summarise the last construct elements.

Table 2: Coding the factor

NO	Codes	Study Items
1	**OC**	Organization Culture
2	**OST**	Organization Structure
3	**STR**	Organization Strategy
4	**KS**	Knowledge Sharing
5	**IT**	Information Technology
6	**KM**	Knowledge Management
7	**OP**	Organization Performance

The Frequency Tables

The frequency table (see Table 3) lists the study factors and their frequency in addition to the counted positive and negative responses. The responses were coded positively if any of the participants expressed a positive opinion about one of the study constructs; the reverse applied to negative coding (Alshurideh, 2013, 2014; Ghannajeh et al., 2015). Moreover, the contingency table (see Table 4 and Figure 2) summarises the primary study constructs and sub-constructs in addition to the positive and negative frequencies of each primary construct.

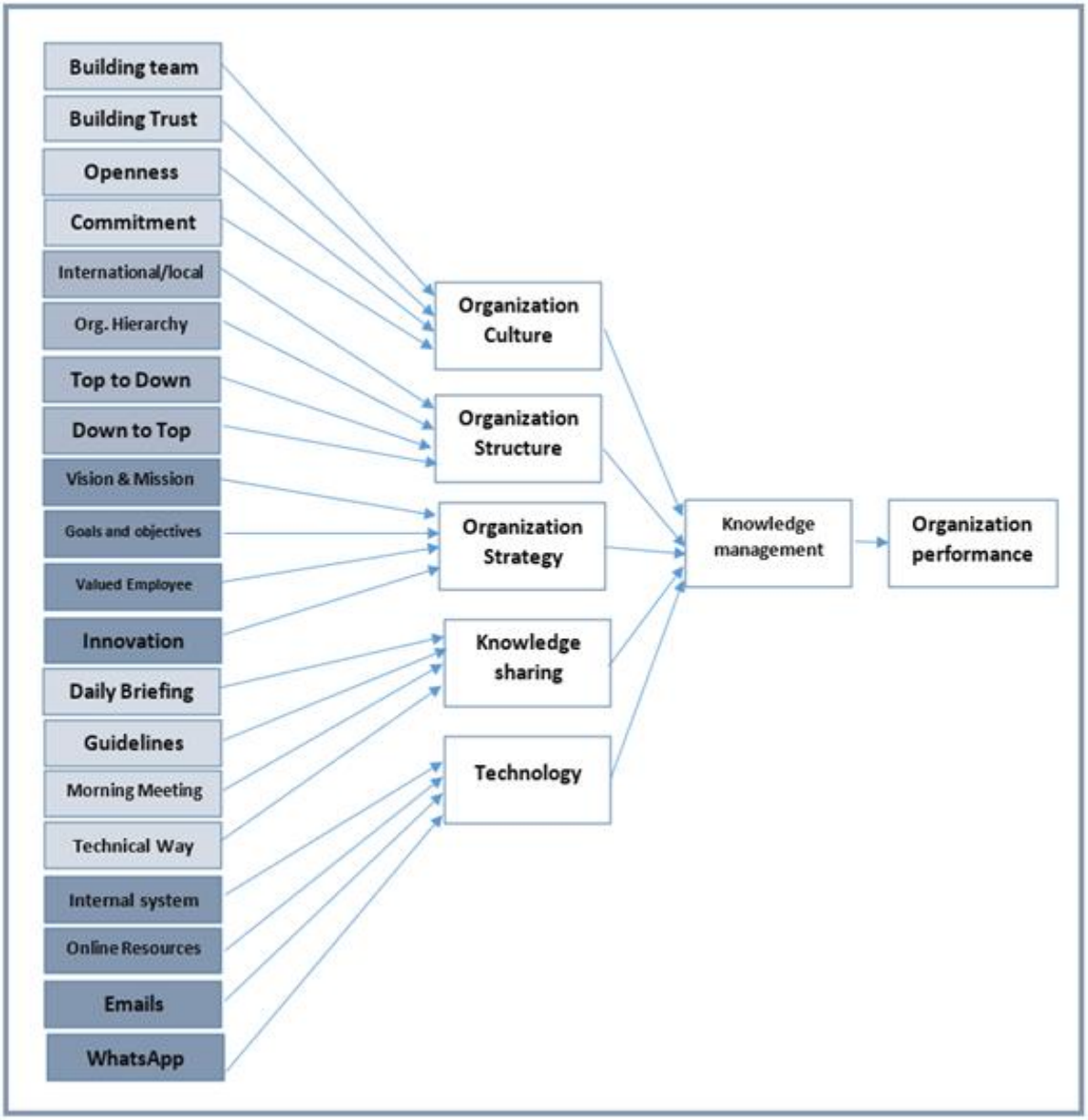
Table 3: The Frequencies of Positive and Negative Incidents

Factors	Total	Positive	Negative	Balance Between + -
Organization Culture	165	152	13	139
Organization Structure	174	162	12	150
Organization Strategy	182	167	15	152
Knowledge Sharing	166	152	14	138
Information Technology	146	135	11	124
Total	**833**	**768**	**65**	**703**

Table 4: *Coding and Frequencies for the Study Construct and Sub-constructs*

Code	Theme /Domain	Frequency Positive	Frequency Negative	balance
OC	**Organization Culture**			
BT	▪ Build Team	152	13	139
BUT	▪ Build Trust			
OPE	▪ Openness			
CO	▪ Commitment			
ID	▪ Identity			
AU	▪ Authentic			
MU	▪ Multi Nationality			
OST	**Organization Structure**			
IN	▪ International	162	12	150
OH	▪ Organization Hierarchy			
CE	-CEO, Executives			
MA	-Managers			
SM	-Sub Manager			
ASS	-Assistant			
ST	-Staff			
TD	▪ Top to Down			
STR	**Organization Strategy**			
VM	▪ Vision & Mission	167	15	152
GT	▪ Goals and Target			
VE	▪ Value Employees			
I	▪ Innovation			
SUS	▪ Sustainability			
E	▪ Expansion			
TRA	▪ Training			
KS	**Knowledge Sharing**			
DF	▪ Daily briefing	152	14	138
SI	▪ Shared information			
GU	▪ Guidelines from others			
MM	▪ Morning meeting			
TW	▪Technical way			
IT	**Information Technology**			
INS	▪ Internal System/booking system	135	11	124
OR	▪ Online resources			
EM	▪ Email			
WAT	▪ WhatsApp			
Total		**768**	**65**	**703**

Figure 2. *Research Method*



Discussion

The results of the analysis of the above-mentioned contingency table suggested that all internal factors (OC, OST, STR, KS, and IT) positively affected an organisation's KM. The number of total positive incidents was 833, while that of the negative ones was 65. The bar chart and the pie chart shown in Figures 3 and 4 suggest that STR was responsible for 22% of incidents, making it the most influential factor. This is because STR is the element responsible for controlling procedures, policies, and KS methods. Responsible for 21% of incidents, OST was the second most influential factor; evidently, it has an essential role in the spreading of

information within organisations. That is because OST controls the movement of knowledge (top–down, bottom–up, or both). OC and KS were the third and the fourth most influential factors, affecting 20% and 19% of the incidents, respectively. An organisation with a positive OC will encourage KS implementation. Likewise, OC positively affects how an organisation manages its internal knowledge acquisition, adaptation, and sharing. IT took the last spot, affecting about 17.5% of the incidents. That is because IT is essential but ultimately unable to influence KM without the help of other internal factors that must be in place for IT to be useful.

Figure 3. *Impact of the Factor (positive and negative incidents)*

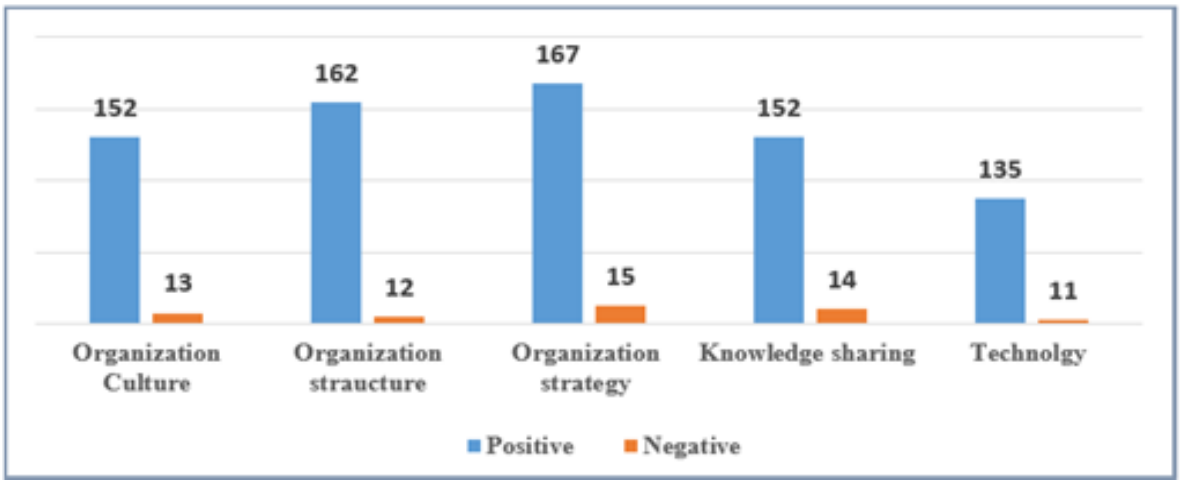
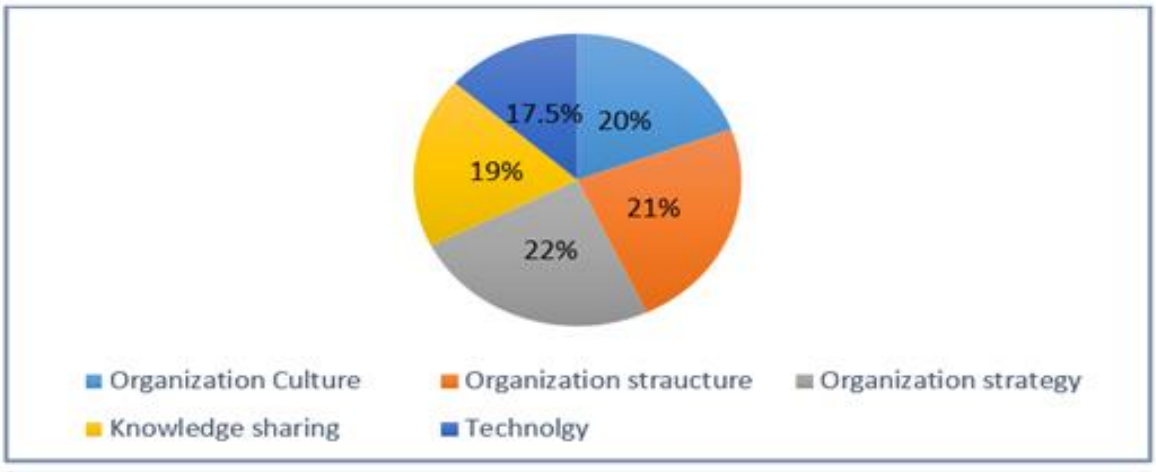


Figure 4. *Percentage Impact of Each Factor*



Organisational Culture

In evaluating the effects of OC, the results from the contingency table showed a positive impact of OC on KM, with the authenticity and identity of the OC contributing to the development of organisational trust, openness, and commitment, even in multi-national organisations. The numbers of positive and negative OC episodes are 152 and 13, respectively. Results show that OC has a positive influence on KM, which supports P1. This idea is confirmed by many authors (Alshurideh et al., 2012; Ashurideh, 2010; Chuang et al., 2013; Giampaoli et al., 2017; Jain & Moreno, 2015). Chang and Chuang (2011) point out that there is a positive effect of OC on KM. Scholars also mention that OC is the most critical element influence the implementation of KM. Joshi and Chawla (2019) support the impact of OC on KM and mention that when people work in a trusting environment, they are likely to put a lot of effort into KM and KS. Hence, per Lee et al. (2012), it is important for any organisation to establish a collaborative culture to support practical experience and implicit KS through effective communication, which eventually supports the implementation of KM. One participant said: "Culture is how you build your teams in your organisation." This agrees with the ideas of Singh and Sharma (2011), who indicate that OC is positively associated with KM. Consequently, an organisation must focus on building team spirit, openness, trust, authenticity, proactiveness, autonomy, and collaboration to make KM's functioning successful.

Organisational Structure

The second factor positively affecting KM is OST. As per the contingency table, the numbers of positive and negative OST episodes are 162 and 12, respectively. Results showed that OST has a positive influence on KM, which supports P2. Many authors such as Mosconi and Roy (2013), Al-dweeri et al. (2017), Alshurideh et al. (2017), Joshi and Chawla (2019) Alshurideh et al. (2020) and Alzoubi et al. (2020) confirm this result. OST plays an essential role insofar as it influences positive communication among the staff, highlights the importance of decision-making, and improves efficiency and effectiveness of the execution of creative ideas (Mahmoudsalehi et al., 2012). This is supported by Mom et al. (2007), who clarify that OST usually controls the flow of knowledge; hence, an appropriate OST ensures that information is transferred suitably between the employees and encourages the organisation to rely on both the bottom–up and the top–down knowledge exchange. One of the participants agreed with this, saying: "The knowledge is always cascaded throughout the corporate structures." However, Lee et al. (2012) point out that, within a decentralised system, OST can increase the level of competition between the departments and decrease the degree of collaboration, KS, and even KM. Accordingly, the essential aspect of OST lies in using an appropriate structure for managing both people and knowledge (Mom et al., 2007).

Organisational Strategy

The third factor affecting KM is STR, which is related to 167 positive and 15 negative incidents. The results indicate that STR positively affects KM, which supports P3. Many authors agree with this supposition (Alkalha et al., 2012; Alshraideh et al., 2017; ELSamen & Alshurideh, 2012; Greiner & Bo, 2014; Hansenet al., 1999; Harlow, 2017). Zack (1999) mentions aligning STR with KM creates additional value. Greiner and Bo (2014) suggest that managers should be familiar with their company's objectives and choose the right KM strategies. One of the participants said: "We are a well-known brand, and all our staff work to ensure our leadership in the hospitality sector. All of us work towards a single vision."

Knowledge Sharing

Results showed that KS has a positive impact on KM, which supports P4. The numbers of positive and negative KS episodes are 152 and 14, respectively. This is in line with the findings of a large number of studies (Al Kurdi, Alshurideh, & Salloum, 2020; Lee, 2016; Massaro et al., 2014; Samuel & Odor, 2018). Massaro et al. (2014) highlight that management should not disregard the importance of KS. This was confirmed by one of the participants, who said: "Our organisation has employees of different ethnicities and nationality, and each worker has his/her own unique perspective. If we all sit together and brainstorm, we get the best results."

Information Technology

The numbers of positive and negative IT incidents are 135 and 11, respectively, and the results shown in the contingency table suggest that IT positively affects KM. This fully supports P5. This view is also shared by many authors (Altamony et al., 2012; Borghoff & Pareschi, 1997; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Tseng, 2008). Davenport and Prusak (1998) mention that IT is useful as a tool for managing and storing information in organisational documents to support KM. One participant said: "Except for the traditional email system, we also have an internal online course platform that allows you to see how your coworkers, employees, or even entire divisions are doing. I use this information to identify the development points for our staff." IT positively affects KM by establishing connections between people through applications like email, chatrooms, video conferences, and social media (Al Dmour et al., 2014; Alshurideh, 2016; Alshurideh, Salloum, Al Kurdi, & Al-Emran, 2019; Borghoff & Pareschi, 1997; Salloum, Alshurideh, et al., 2020; Salloum, Mhamdi et al., 2018).

Knowledge Management and Organisational Performance

The numbers of positive and negative KM episodes are 130 and 12, respectively. Generally, the results suggest that KM has a positive influence OP, which supports P6 and agrees with the

views of many scholars (Alshurideh, Alhadid, & Al Kurdi, 2015; Alshurideh et al., 2012; Ammari et al., 2017; Hussinki et al., 2017; Jain & Moreno, 2015; Ong & Tan, 2018; Shannak et al., 2012; Zaim et al., 2018). Wang et al. (2016) point to the positive impact of KM on OP by looking at the intellectual capital of organisations. KM, organisational learning, teamwork, autonomy, and freedom are all thought to positively influence OP (Jain & Moreno, 2015).

Managerial Implications

The findings of this study have many managerial policies and implications. First, it pertains to managers who want to change their organisations for the better using the mentioned factors as their tools. Managers should be encouraged to pay attention to the OC, assess it, and try to improve it to produce a better OP. Employees must trust their managers for their teams to be significantly enhanced; this trust, however, will result in stable and committed working groups. Second, managers should observe the path of knowledge in their organisations; it is logical to ensure the top–down passing of information, but sometimes you get brilliant ideas from the lower levels. Third, STR was found to be the most influential factor affecting KM. Thus, an organisation and its managers should know how to properly explain their strategies to the employees. Everyone inside an organisation must be familiar with the company vision, mission, and objectives. Thus, employees should take part in operational planning and feel important participants of both the planning process and the eventual organisational achievements. Fourth, KS is one of the tools that managers should embrace to generate innovative ideas for problem-solving. Finally, managers should be willing to use new IT and try to improve the existing technologies from time to time to use them as a competitive advantage, enhancing OP (especially that related to employee KM and customer KM) (Alshurideh et al., 2012, 2015; Alshurideh, et al., 2019; Shannak et al., 2012).

Limitation and Future Research Venues

Although the study has a few significant contributions to offer, it is not free of limitations. The first one is related to the fact that the data was collected from hotels only in the cities of Sharjah and Ajman; it will be valuable to gather more data from participants in other cities like Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Second, the sample might not be large enough for the purposes of the study. More interviews are needed to have a comprehensive picture of the factors affecting KM, and such data must be collected from both the top and middle-level managers and the employees at the operational level. Third, although this study contributes to the general understanding of the internal factors affecting KM and OP, most of the studied factors are related to internal organisational factors like culture, strategy, structure, and information technology. Future research may benefit from incorporating other external factors like market competition, rewards, leadership motivation, and human behaviour.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examined the main internal organisational factors affecting KM and investigated whether KM influenced OP. The main internal factors are organisational culture, organisational structure, organisational strategy, knowledge sharing, and information technology. The study is successful in terms of achieving its objectives by having gathered appropriate data using personal interviews with upper and middle-level managers in the hospitality sector. The study concludes that all the internal factors in question affect both KM and OP. These findings have significant consequences for managers and executives alike, showing the qualitative effects of KM practices on OP. Employing a qualitative approach served as the main contribution of this study since it allowed it to reflect on the interviewees' views, opinions, and experiences with the studied constructs. The findings of this study provide executives and managers with the appropriate recommendations regarding how to use KM in the UAE hospitality sector. The results also stress the importance of STR, OST, and OC for the application and control of KM in the hospitality industry.

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