

Influence of Training on Knowledge Management in Selected Commercial Banks in Eldoret Town, Kenya

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Abstract: Knowledge is a critical asset in any organization. A proper management of knowledge can increase organizational performance, improve quality of service, and sustain competitive advantage. To utilize knowledge for organizations' competitiveness, it is important to know how internal organizational factors influence knowledge management. It is from this background that the study sought to investigate the effects of internal organizational factors on knowledge management in commercial banks in Eldoret. Based on the study, this paper presents and discusses the findings on the influence of training on knowledge management in commercial banks in Eldoret town. The study was guided by the knowledge-based theory and employed a correlational design. It targeted 28 commercial banks in Eldoret which comprised 28 managers, 140 heads of department, 110 tellers, 56 personal bankers, 130 credit officers and 84 customer care employees totalling to 548 employees. From this population, simple random sampling technique was used to select 231 respondents. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were then used to analyse the collected data. The study results indicated that training significantly and positively influenced knowledge management in commercial banks. R-squared was 0.866 an indication that a variation of 86.6% in knowledge management in commercial banks in Eldoret town was due to changes in the internal organization factors, among them being training. The study recommended that the management of commercial banks should implement proper training programmes in order to enhance effective and efficient knowledge management among employees. The study further recommended a further research on the role of external organizational factors on knowledge management in other sectors in Kenya and the effects of knowledge management on performance of commercial banks in Kenya.

Keywords: Influence, Training, Knowledge Management, Commercial Banks, Eldoret Town, Kenya

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I. Introduction

Knowledge management (KM) is a systematic and integrated management strategy that develops, transfers, transmits, stores, and implements knowledge to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the organization's manpower¹. Fugate, Stank and Mentzer² also define knowledge management as the process of acquiring, organizing, storing, sharing and using knowledge by organizations. It is a branch of management that aims at attaining the optimum business performance through the synergy of people, processes and technology in creating and sharing relevant knowledge³.

According to Bhatti and Qureshi⁴, knowledge management entails the efforts to explore tacit and explicit knowledge of individuals, groups, and organizations and to convert this treasure into organizational assets that can support decision-making at different levels. In addition, knowledge management is a collaborative and integrated approach to the creation, capture, organization, access, and use of an enterprise's intellectual assets⁵. Brooking⁶ regards knowledge management as the process by which organizations manage human-centred assets, the function of which is to guard and grow knowledge owned by individuals and, where possible, transfer the asset into a form where it can be more readily shared by other employees in the company.

Chang and Lee⁷ have conducted a study on the relationship between knowledge accumulation capability and organizational innovation in Taiwan on 380 small medium enterprises. The study sought to establish the influence of external environment or organizational culture and knowledge accumulation ability on organizational innovation. The researchers used questionnaire to collect data which was analysed by regression analysis. Their findings indicated that the capability to obtain knowledge can positively and significantly affect knowledge administrative and technical innovation. Knowledge expansion capability can positively and significantly affect administrative innovation. In addition, external environment and organizational culture have significant interaction effects with knowledge accumulation capability on organizational innovation. This

implied that knowledge management has become necessary as we have moved from a society where information was scarce to a society where there is a glut of information. The problem presently is generally not about procuring information but deciding which information to use. Organizations should be careful in acquiring relevant data and processing those in an ever-changing business landscape. It is equally important for businesses to discard obsolete information and acquire the latest information to survive and stay competitive.

Zack, McKeen and Singh⁸ also did an explanatory analysis of knowledge management and organizational performance on 49 retail organizations in Pakistan. Questionnaires were used to collect data. The data was analysed by use of a regression analysis. The study findings indicated that KM practices are directly related to organizational performance which, in turn, was directly related to financial performance. There was no direct relationship between KM practices and financial performance. A different set of KM practices was associated with each value discipline (customer intimacy, product development and operational excellence). Therefore, a gap existed between the KM practices that firms believe to be important and those that were directly related to organizational performance.

Roland⁹ conducted a study on knowledge management in the business-driven action learning process on 118 firms in Indonesia. Both primary and secondary data were used as source of data. The results indicated that performance depends on a firm's ability to integrate knowledge into the value creation process and into core competency based strategies. Furthermore, his findings revealed that to achieve and maintain a high level of performance, an organization must develop efficient mechanisms for creating, transferring, and integrating knowledge. Similarly, Noruzi, Dalfard, Azhdari, Nazari-Shirkouhi and Rezazadeh¹⁰ conducted another research to explore the influence of KM process on organizational performance among 106 companies. Their results showed that KM process positively influences the organizational performance of manufacturing firms. Moreover, Garcia-Morales, Llorens-Montes and Verdu-Jover¹¹ suggest that strategic variables of knowledge (knowledge slack, absorptive capacity, tackiness) play a positive mediating role between transformational leadership and organizational performance.

Another study by Cheruiyot, Jagongo and Owino¹² investigated the factors affecting institutionalization of knowledge management in manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. The specific objectives were to determine the current status of knowledge management institutionalization, examine factors that influence institutionalization of knowledge management and the challenges in institutionalization of knowledge management in the manufacturing enterprise. The target population was 60 senior managers in the three selected manufacturing companies. The researcher took a census of the heads of departments and deputy heads of departments in charge of the following departments: human resource, ICT, Finance, marketing, procurement, production, internal audit, administration, research & development, public relations and communications, operations and engineering. The study findings showed that two critical factors influence institutionalization of knowledge management. These are organizational practices and technological infrastructure and allocation of resources towards such efforts measurably increase knowledge base, management awareness and promotion, climate of openness, teamwork and trust exists among employees

Another study by Katua¹³ examined the framework for applying knowledge management in organizations by determining the knowledge processes used at the organization. The study also determined the techniques and tools that comprise of the KM processes for the organization. The research further explored the existing frameworks in details and outlined the problems of each of the discussed frameworks. The framework developed as part of this research project combined aspects – people and organizational culture, information and communications technology and knowledge management processes and builds on them. Katua explored this impact based on an empirical survey of three Kenyan organizations. A factor analysis supported the importance of these three factors – people and organizational culture, information and communications technology and knowledge management processes as contributing significantly to KM. The findings obtained by Katua indicated that the level of KM in organizations was very low. To help organizations benefit from KM initiatives, the study recommended that a framework should be developed to assist organizations in applying knowledge management in their respective organizations. Further implementation of the framework should result in improved application of knowledge management in the organizations. It is important to ensure that organizational culture and people, knowledge management process and information technology are aligned towards the goals of knowledge management, and that best practice approaches are used in the knowledge management initiatives deployed in the organizations.

A study by Nzui¹⁴ investigated the information and communication technology and knowledge management at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) in Kenya. The objective of the study was to determine the role ICT has played in enhancing knowledge management at ICRAF and challenges the organization faces in knowledge management. Nzui employed descriptive survey design in which primary data was collected using questionnaires. The collected data was analysed using SPSS. Using primary data collected from 125 employees at the headquarters in Nairobi Kenya, the researcher found that more than three-quarters of ICRAF staff understood what knowledge management is and that they are aware that the processes of capturing, cataloguing,

storing and sharing on information are paramount to preserving institutional memory. There was a prevalence of use of ICT in managing knowledge with more than half of the knowledge in the organization originating from ICT based sources and a similar portion of information and knowledge in the organization stored in ICT based systems.

Nzuifurther established that ICT has a major influence on knowledge management practices in the organization with systems being well integrated and information found to be up to date and trusted. The research identified poor organizational structure, poor organizational incentives in staff compensation and recognition, inadequate organizational learning, insufficient staff training and awareness, and poor time management as major challenges to knowledge management at ICRAF. The study recommended that training staff on IT systems and introducing incentives to organization learning will contribute towards the success of knowledge management in the institution. The study also recommended that introducing a networked organization structure will improve communication among staff and improve trust. Integration of ICT in each of the knowledge management processes will foster and sustain knowledge management in the organization in the long run.

A study conducted by Wachira¹⁵ examined the application of knowledge management within Kenya's steel manufacturing industry. Three key aspects of Knowledge Management application were analysed; the awareness of Knowledge management in the respective organizations, the extent of implementation of knowledge management and the factors affecting implementation of knowledge management. The survey obtained information from 20 large steel manufacturers in Kenya. The primary data was collected through structured questionnaires some of which were sent by email while others were delivered by hand. The collected questionnaires were processed through SPSS and excel software. The findings of the study indicated that steel organizations recognized that knowledge was a key asset in the organization. They also acknowledge that Knowledge management is beneficial to the organization. The level of awareness is high in respect to knowledge management even though this is a fairly new concept in this part of the world. The study recommended that top management in these organizations requires to be made to see the link between knowledge management initiatives and the real benefit of knowledge management. With the emergence of trade blocks and common markets in East Africa, it is only important to create a synergy where critical concepts such as knowledge management are shared across companies in this region to achieve corporate excellence that is balanced across the region.

Knowledge management can increase organizational performance, improve quality of service, and sustain competitive advantage. Currently organizations widely apply knowledge management to improve knowledge in their companies. To utilize knowledge for organizations' competitiveness, it is important to know the factors that affect knowledge management¹⁶.Moffett, McAdam and Parkinson¹⁷ have identified ten key factors in successful knowledge management. These are a friendly organizational culture, senior management leadership and commitment, employee involvement, employee training, trustworthy teamwork, employee empowerment, information systems infrastructure, performance measurement, benchmarking, and knowledge structure. Beijerse¹⁸ states that the success of the implementation of knowledge management depends on many factors, for example, leadership, culture, structure, roles and responsibilities, information technology infrastructures, and measurement. Choi¹⁹, in an empirical study, proposed four success internal organizational factors of knowledge management, leadership, organizational culture, information technology, and training.

Training and Knowledge Management

Armstrong²⁰ argues that training refers to programmes that are designed to provide workers with information, new skills, or professional development opportunities. For example, people might be required to participate in a new employee orientation or on-the-job training when they are hired. Other types of employee training programmes include those that encourage staff members to brush up on certain skills, or to stay current with developments in their field.

Training as an organizational factor is specifically aimed at improving employees' competences. This explains why people are considered the building blocks of organizational learning that can be acquired through training²¹. McMahon and Lawler²² report that training in related field is the most efficient way to acquire knowledge. Choi (2000) support this view stating that training is the best and most effective way of capturing human wisdom. In order for organizations to increase and improve their products and services, they need to serve as a mentor in managing the knowledge gained through training. Mentoring is known to encourage continuous learning and problem solving skills²³. A number of studies, such as Lawler²¹, McMahon and Lawler²², Choi¹⁹ and Kaufman²³, assert that training is the most important factor in knowledge acquisition. However, the authors have not shown that the capacity of training influences successful knowledge transfer.

Statement of the Problem

Knowledge management is recognized as a critical element in the management of any organization. It constitutes a key resource for organizations to gain competitive advantage. Organizations are increasingly

realizing that in order to succeed they have to view knowledge and knowledge management factors as an asset²⁴. Proper knowledge management practices can help companies to move faster, become more efficient and more innovative. In addition, Gold, Malhotra and Segars.²⁵ state that effective application of knowledge management enables an organization to be innovative, better harmonize its efforts, quickly commercialize new products, foresee surprises, become more responsive to market changes and reduce redundancy of knowledge and information available to it. Managing knowledge is as important to banking institutions as it is for any other kind of organization. The change in the global competitive business environment has compelled banks to rationalize their products and services and has made them to look into knowledge management in order to improve their competitiveness and performance⁴. Despite the significance of implementing a knowledge management initiative, there are very few banking institutions that are formally engaged in fully integrated KM programmes⁴. Jasimuddin¹⁶ argues that commercial banks have attempted to implement knowledge management efforts but have often failed due to the lack of an appropriate cultural context that creates and nurtures reciprocal trust, openness and cooperation. Furthermore, creation of knowledge groups may be viewed as too expensive to undertake²⁶. More so, knowledge sharing takes time and, as such, experts in certain fields may not be willing to participate in knowledge sharing as some organizations do not reward them. It is, therefore, on the basis of this background that the study sought to establish the influence of internal organizational factors on knowledge management. This paper discusses the research findings on the influence of training on knowledge management in selected commercial banks in Eldoret town, Kenya.

II. Materials and Methods

Study Design: Correlational research design.

Study Location: Eldoret town, Kenya

Study Population: 548 respondents who included 28 bank managers, 140 head of departments, 110 tellers, 56 personal bankers, 130 credit officers and 84 customer care employees from the 28 commercial banks.

Sample Size: 12 bank managers, 59 heads of departments, 46 tellers, 24 personal bankers, 55 credit officers and 35 customer care employees making sample of 231 respondents.

Sample Size Calculation: The sample of the research was calculated using Taro Yamane's formula²⁸ with 95% confidence level.

Procedure Methodology: The study used questionnaire as the main instrument of data collection.

Data Analysis: Descriptive and inferential statistics were then used to analyse the collected data. Descriptive statistics included measures of central tendency, that is, mean, frequencies and percentages. Under inferential statistics, multiple regressions was used to determine the influence of training, technology, management support, organizational culture on knowledge management in commercial banks in Eldoret town.

III. Results and Discussion

The study sought to establish the influence of training on knowledge management in Commercial Banks in Eldoret town. Among the factors examined were: scheduling of training, number of times the employees attended training, management support for knowledge management, and the influence of training on knowledge management.

Scheduling of Training in Commercial Banks

The study sought to investigate how often commercial banks in Eldoret town scheduled trainings on knowledge management. The responses were as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Scheduling of Training in Commercial Banks

Scheduling of training	Frequency	Percent
Never	25	12.0
Twice	38	18.3
Sometimes	35	16.8
Often	40	19.2
Always	70	33.6
Total	208	100.0

Source: Research (2018)

From the results, 12% of the participants indicated that their organizations has never scheduled for training, 18.3% said that training was rarely done, 16.8% reported that training was done sometimes, 19.2% were of the opinion that training was done often, and 33.6% reported that training was always scheduled in their banks. The study findings indicated that majority of respondents were of the opinion that training was always scheduled in order to increase their skills and knowledge.

Number of Times Respondents attended Training

The research sought to examine the number of times the respondents had been trained in the last one year. The findings were as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Number of Times Respondents Attended Training

Times of Training	Frequency	Percent
Once	47	22.5
Twice	50	24
Thrice	63	30.3
More than three times	48	23
Total	208	100.0

Source: Research (2018)

From the findings 22.5% of the respondents agreed that they have been trained once, 24.0% indicated that they have been trained twice, 30.3% reported that they have been trained thrice and 23.0% stated that they have been trained more than three times. The findings indicated that majority of employees agreed that they have been trained thrice in the last one year.

Management Support on Knowledge Management

The research also sought to determine whether the management is involved in knowledge management trainings in the bank. The findings on this item were as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Management Support on Knowledge Management

Management Support	Frequency	Percent
Yes	137	65.8
No	71	34.2
Total	208	100.0

Source: Research (2018)

From the study, 65.8% of the respondents agreed that top management was supportive of knowledge management trainings in the commercial banks while 34.2% disagreed that bank management was involved in knowledge management. Evidently, the top management offered the needed support for knowledge management trainings.

Influence of Training on Knowledge Management

The study sought the respondents' views on the extent to which training influenced knowledge management in Commercial Banks in Eldoret town. The responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale of 5-Extremely large extent, 4-A Large Extent, 3-A Moderate Extent, 2-A Small Extent, and 1-Extremely Small Extent. The research results were as summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Influence of Training on Knowledge Management

Statement		5	4	3	2	1	Total	Mean
Training enhances the acquisition of new knowledge.	F	53	50	49	35	28	208	2.93
	%	25.6	24.4	23.7	17.1	13.7	100	58.6
Training changes employees attitude to promote a knowledge sharing culture	F	56	43	50	29	28	208	2.79
	%	27.1	20.8	24.4	13.9	13.7	100	55.8
Continued training leads to an increase in knowledge retention	F	52	50	34	35	36	208	2.72
	%	25.2	24.2	16.3	17.1	17.4	100	54.4
Training enables effective application of knowledge	F	56	52	50	28	21	208	3.18
	%	26.8	24.9	24.2	13.7	10.3	100	63.6
Training has led to efficient storage of knowledge	F	42	47	49	41	28	208	2.93
	%	20.3	22.7	23.7	19.8	13.4	100	58.6

Source: Research (2018)

From the findings in Table 4 above, some of the respondents (25.6%) agreed that training enhances knowledge management to extremely larger extent while 24.4% agreed that training enhances knowledge management to a larger extent. Moreover, 23.7% agreed that training enhances knowledge management to a

moderate extent, 17.1% that training enhances knowledge management to a smaller extent and 13.7% agreed that training enhances knowledge management to a small extent. In relation to the view that training changes employee’s attitude to promote a knowledge sharing culture, 27.1% of participants indicated to extremely larger extent, 20.8% agreed that training changes employees attitude to promote a knowledge sharing culture to a large extent, 24.4% agreed that training changes employees attitude to promote a knowledge sharing culture to a moderate extent, 13.7% agreed to a small extent and 13.7% to extremely small extent. With regard to the issue that continued training leads to an increase in knowledge retention, 25.2% of the respondents agreed to an extremely large extent, 24.2% of participants agreed to a larger extent, 41.3% to a moderate extent, 17.1% to a small extent and 17.4% to extremely small extent.

Further, 26.8% of the respondents agreed training enables effective application of knowledge to extremely large extent, 24.9% of the respondents agreed to large extent that training enables effective application of knowledge by employees, 24.2% agreed to a moderate extent, 13.7% to a small extent and 10.3% to extremely small extent. Lastly, the findings above show that 20.3% of respondents agreed that training has led to efficient storage of knowledge to extremely large extent, 22.7% agreed to large extent that training has led to efficient storage of knowledge, 27.1% agreed to moderate extent, 19.8% to small extent and 13.4% agreed to extremely small extent.

The test of hypothesis on the influence of training on knowledge management established that a unit change in training will lead to a 0.133 unit change in knowledge management, hence a positive significant relationship of $p=0.000$. The findings concurred with those of McMahon and Lawler²², Choi¹⁹ and Kaufman²³ who agree that training is the most important factor in knowledge acquisition. However, these authors have not shown that the capacity of training influences successful knowledge transfer.

Aspects of Knowledge Management

The respondents were asked to rate various aspects of knowledge management based on the following scale: 1- Very poor, 2-Poor, 3-Fair, and 4-Good 5-Excellent. Their responses were as presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Aspects of Knowledge Management

Statement		5	4	3	2	1	Total	Mean
The methods of acquiring knowledge within the organization	F	49	89	52	10	8	208	2.22
	%	23.7	42.8	24.9	4.6	3.9	100	44.4
The means through which knowledge is transferred between all stakeholders of the organizations	F	23	49	54	26	56	208	3.21
	%	11	23.7	25.9	12.5	26.9	100	64.2
The use of acquired knowledge within the organization	F	60	66	32	19	31	208	2.5
	%	28.9	31.8	15.2	9.3	14.9	100	50
The level of application of modern knowledge management techniques within the organization	F	50	98	39	11	10	208	2.19
	%	24.2	46.9	18.8	5.4	4.6	100	43.8
Storage of knowledge acquired by the organization	F	52	60	46	27	23	208	2.55
	%	25.4	28.9	22	13.2	10.5	100	51

Source: Research (2018)

From the findings 23.7% of the respondents agreed that the methods of acquiring knowledge within the organization are excellent, 42.8% agreed that they are good, 24.6% agreed that they are fair, 4.6% agreed that they are poor and 3.9% agreed that they are very poor. The results indicated that 11% of participants agreed that the means through which knowledge is transferred between all stakeholders of the organizations is excellent, 23.7% agreed that it is good, 25.9% agreed that it is fair, 12.5% agreed that it is poor and 26.9% agreed that it is very poor.

Further, the study shows 28.9% of participants agreed that the use of acquired knowledge within the commercial banks is excellent, 31.8% agreed that it is good, 15.2% agreed that it is fair, 9.3% agreed that it is poor and 14.9% agreed that it is very poor. In addition the study indicates 24.2% of the respondents agreed that the level of application of modern knowledge management techniques within the organization is excellent, 46.9% indicated that it is good, 18.8% stated that it is fair, 5.4% stated that it is poor and 4.6% agreed that it is very poor. Moreover the findings show 25.4% of respondents indicated that that storage of knowledge acquired by the organization is excellent, 28.9% agreed that it is good, 22% agreed that it is fair, 13.2% agreed that it is poor and 10.5% agreed that it is very poor

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the study, it was concluded that changes in knowledge management of commercial banks in Eldoret can be accounted for by internal organization factors. Clearly, there is a strong positive relationship between training on knowledge management and improvement in knowledge management practices in commercial banks in Eldoret town. Further, the study concludes that training affects knowledge management in commercial banks in Eldoret town. Specifically, training enhances the acquisition of new knowledge, changes employees attitude to promote a knowledge sharing culture, leads to an increase in knowledge retention, enables effective application of knowledge and has led to efficient storage of knowledge. In light of the findings and conclusion, the human resource management of commercial banks should conduct continuous training programmes to their employees in order to enhance effective and efficient knowledge management practices.

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