Organizational Knowledge Management: its Relation with Employees Performance in Telecommunication Company in Qatar

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Abstract: This study examines the status of organizational knowledge management in Qatar Telecommunication (Qtel) as it relates to the organizational performance. This research used the questionnaire survey tool for collection of data and the 104 respondents were managers and employees of Qtel. The results of this research indicated that there is significant relationship between the status and level of organizational knowledge management and work performance. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected. The following are the major finding of the study: 1) The respondents agreed on the status of the organizational knowledge management in Qtel as shown in an overall mean of 3.6. 2) The organizational knowledge management of Qtel is effective to the operation of the company as revealed by an overall rating of 3.8. 3) There is significant relationship between the status and the level of effectiveness of the organizational knowledge management in terms of organizational structure, organizational culture, technological know-how, and organizational policies in Qtel. 4) There are six major problems encountered by the respondents in relation with the organizational knowledge management and the work performance.

Keywords: Organizational structure, Organizational culture, Technological know-how, Organizational policy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is the most powerful possession of an individual in an organization. Ancient man gained his knowledge from his surroundings and learnt how to protect himself from wild animals as his dwelling place was forest. Later, he learnt agriculture and started living along the river shores where great civilizations in the ancient world developed. Likewise, it was in early times, where knowledge was purely people oriented. Those who have knowledge shared it with others at their own discretion. However, in the passage of time, civilization advanced and knowledge was institutionalised by establishing schools and universities. At present day world, there are excellent universities, educational centres, print and digital media that impart knowledge to the society. As time passed by, different disciplines whether it is Science & Technology or Arts & Literature has embraced huge degrees of knowledge and thus, Knowledge Management (KM) became more important than ever before. Apparently, business organizations understood the need for implementing KM practices. In early 1998, there were still very few organizations that had a comprehensive Knowledge Management practice in operation. But nowadays, even in small organizations there is the presence of KM framework in place. Large scale organizations like Walt Disney and Boeing have established Corporate Universities for their Knowledge Management.

Knowledge Management is the name of a concept in which an enterprise consciously and comprehensively gathers, organizes, shares, and examines its knowledge in terms of resources, documents, and people skills (Koenig, 2012). KM uses data mining and some methods of operation to push information to users. Selection of Knowledge Management System (KMS) software is critical for effective KM. Some KMSs can analyse the relationship between content, people, topic, activity and produce results (Rouse, 2006).

In the present global business environment, companies have recognized KMS as tool for survival as well as a competitive advantage. The advancement of information technology has enabled the organizations to manage knowledge with ease and effectiveness when compared with the traditional methods of KM (Rabelo, 2004). Nowadays, companies are increasingly investing in KM initiatives and social collaboration and networking has become part of Organizations' Knowledge Management (OKM) practices. They are making deliberate efforts for making their social presence through social networks and to increase their social capital.

The past decade has witnessed the increasing attention of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) organizations towards knowledge management and its development. Such initiatives were evidently shown in a number of local studies (Al Ammari, 2004, Al Kabi 2009, Karim et.al. 2010).

Along this line of thought, this study aims to investigate the Organizational Knowledge Management and its significant relationship to work performance in Qatar Telecommunication (QTEL). Specifically, this study seeks to explore the following: 1) The status of Organizational Knowledge Management in Qatar Telecommunication Company in terms of: a) Organizational structure, b) Organizational culture, c) Technological know- how, and d) Organizational policies; 2) The level of relationship of the Organizational Knowledge Management on employees performance in QTEL in terms of the variables cited; 3) The significant relationship between the status and level of effectiveness of Organizational Knowledge Management on employees' performance in QTEL and 4) The problems encountered by the staff in relation to OKM in QTEL, and 5) The recommendations proposed to improve the OKM in QTEL.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on qualitative and quantitative research designs making used of the primary as well as secondary data. Quantitative method was utilized through floating survey questionnaire and qualitative method was employed by describing the status of the Knowledge Management as it is practiced. This was done through conducting both semi-structured interviews and documentary reviews. Interview method was used to complement the information obtained through questionnaire. Random sampling was applied to 104 respondents from the total population of 300 wherein 250 are employees and 50 are administrators. Statistical tools were used in analysing data such as SPSS, mean, standard deviation, co-relational and T-Test.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Status and Level of Significance of the Organizational Knowledge Management with Work Performance in Telecommunication Company, Qatar

1. Organizational Structure. As reflected in Table 1, the status and level of significance of the Organizational Knowledge Management with work performance in Telecommunication Company, Qatar in terms of organizational structure is rated by an overall mean of 3.65 which is described as agreed. The administrators and employees both agreed that the organizational structure is the first and important step towards the implementation of the OKM in the company. Likewise, the level of effectiveness of OKM in terms of organizational structure got a weighted mean of 3.8 which means effective.

With regards to the status of OKM, it shows that staff in QTEL agreed with all the indicators except in indicator 5 which is moderately agreed. In indicator 3, both the officers and employees agreed which gave a rating of 3.89 which is the highest mean. It implies that QTEL Directors have the direct supervision on their respective departments. The lowest mean is indicator 5 (3.31) which indicate that there is moderate consent as to the employees' promotion which is based on educational background and performance.

Organizational Knowledge Management along with organizational structure reveals an overall rating of 3.8 which means effective. The highest is the first indicator which gave a rating of 4.0. It indicates that command of leadership in the organizational structure in QTEL is well defined and implemented. While the lowest mean is indicator 4 with a rating of 3.6. It means that Directors are effectively in-charged in evaluating the employees' performance based on the assigned tasks given at the beginning of the year.

The results of the investigation substantiate the idea of Rouse (2006) which state that some KMS can analyse the relationship between structure, people, activity and produce results. Likewise, the findings also supports the opinion of Karim et al. (2010) specifying the important roles of officers in the organization.

2. Organizational Culture. Table 2 presents the status and level of significance of the OKM with work performance in Telecommunication Company; Qatar in terms of organizational culture is rated by an overall mean of 3.4 which is described as moderately agreed. Apparently, the level of effectiveness of OKM in terms of organizational culture got a weighted mean of 3.8 which is effective.

With regards to the status of OKM, it shows that the officers and employees agreed on indicators 1, 4 and 5. Indicator 1 got a rating of 4.0 which is the highest mean. It implies that the management agreed that Muslim employees are allowed to have a prayer break of 15 to 20 minutes every day. The lowest mean is indicator 2 with a rating of 3.0. It indicates that there is moderate consent among employees that non- Muslim personnel are given one day off during Christmas.

Organizational Knowledge Management in terms of organizational culture reveals an overall rating of 3.8 which is effective. The highest are indicators 1, 4 and 5 which gave an effective rating of 3.9. It indicates that in QTEL, it is effectively practice that Muslim employees are allowed to have a prayer break of 15 to 20 minutes every day. Likewise,

queuing priority is highly observed to all customers regardless of their status and nationality. Teamwork is also effectively carried out within their respective department and inter-departments.

The findings establish the study of Al Ammari (2004) which examines KM in various organizations in GCC by studying organizational culture. The results also substantiate the works of Pawlowski and Bick (2012) and Desouza and Evaristo (2013) pointing out that the success of implementing KM in global settings mainly depends on the context like cultural, political, legal and infrastructural aspects.

3. Technological Know-how. As revealed in Table 3 the status and level of significance of the OKM in terms of technological know-how is rated by an overall mean of 3.6 which described as agreed. Likewise, the level of significance of OKM with work performance in terms of technological know-how got a weighted mean of 3.8 which is effective.

With regards to the status of the OKM, it shows that QTEL agreed on all the indicators except indicator 5. Indicator 2 has the highest mean with a rating of 3.8 which means agreed. It implies that QTEL information technology provides employees an easy access to company information using an internal website and other channels. The lowest mean is indicator 5 with a rating of 3.3. It indicates that in QTEL deserving employees are sent to international trainings to gain new technological knowledge so as to abreast the company with the latest technological know- how.

Organizational Knowledge Management along with technological know- how reveals an overall rating of 3.8 which is effective. The highest is the third and fourth indicators with a rating of 4.0 which means effective. It indicates that in QTEL information technology provides all employees training on the use of software to access required information in various departments and the company uses the latest technologies and effectively implementing to the different levels of staff.

The findings validate the studies of Koenig (2012) showing that the essential part of KM in an organization is by making use of the organization's data and information and make available to the employees through portals or content management systems.
According to Koenig information technology gadgets such as Lessons Learned Database, Expertise Locator System, Communities of Practices (COPS) are operationally the components of KMS.   Likewise, Skyrme (2008) also substantiates the findings of the study specifying the relationship between information technology and KM in his works named 'Knowledge Management: Is IT delivering?'. Skyrme has analysed the role of Information Technology (IT) and how information technology accelerated the KM of organizations. He particularly mentioned about emails, portals and Enterprise Content Management Systems and asserted that all of them have contributed for KM in Organization which is also in line with the thoughts of Pee and Kankanhalli (2006)

4. Organizational Policies.   Table 4 shows the status and the level of significance of the OKM in terms of organizational policies which is rated by an overall mean of 3.6 which is described as agreed. Likewise, the level of significance of OKM in terms of organizational policies got a weighted mean of 3.9 which is significantly effective.

With regards to the status of organizational policies, it shows that QTEL agreed on all the indicators except indicator 1 which is moderately agreed. In indicators 3 and 5, the company officers and employees gave a rating of both 3.8, which is the highest mean. It implies that QTEL Directors monitor the implementation of company policies through close supervision and its strictly prohibition of all forms of discriminations in the company. The lowest mean is indicator 1 with a rating of 3.3. It indicates that QTEL employees are moderately knowledgeable about the organizational policies.

Organizational Knowledge Management along with policies reveals an overall rating of 3.9 which is described as effective. The highest are indicators 2 and 3 with a rating of 4.0. It indicates that QTEL officers see to it that company policies and regulations are well implemented. This is done through close monitoring by Directors of all departments. While the lowest mean   is indicator 4 which rated as 3.6. It means that warning letters are issued to employees who violate company policies for first offense.

The findings prove the idea of Firestone and Mc Elroy (2008) pointing out the need for having standards in Knowledge Processing before having Knowledge Management Standards. They also asserted the need for a systematic metrics frame work to continue to make progress in Knowledge Management.

Likewise, the results of the investigation supports also the ideas of Biygutane and Al Yahya (2011) specifying the importance of creating, capturing and documenting knowledge within public organization which addressed to the policy makers and KM heads not only in UAE but also in other GCC countries. The same is true with the opinion of

Al Kabi (2009) stressing the importance of having an effective KMS for the Police Departments in Abu Dhabi as they are responsible to maintain law and order and ensure safety and protection of the public.

Significant Relationship between the Status and the Level of Relationship of the Organizational Knowledge Management with Work Performance

Table 5 shows the results of the relationship between the status and the level of significance of Organizational Knowledge Management in Telecommunication in Qatar with the work performance. It reveals that there is no significant relationship in terms of Organizational structure, organizational culture, technological know-how, and organizational policies.

The findings of the study adhere to the ideas of Zack et al. (2009) pointing out the relationship between KM practices and performance results. Hence, the study found out that KM practices are directly related with organizational performance.

The Problems Encountered by the Respondents in Telecommunication Company, Qatar

The study identified the common problems encountered by the respondents in Telecommunication Company in Qatar.

Among those problems are as follows: 1) Lack of proper orientation of the company's rules and regulations for the new employees; 2) There is a short of encouragement for teamwork among employees to achieve effective work results; 3) There are complexities in communication among the different levels of the organizational structure; 4) Inadequate number of employees sent for latest technological trainings; and 5) No regular conference for all employees to discuss issues and concerns.

Recommendations Proposed to Resolve the Problems Encountered by the Employees in Telecommunication Company, Qatar

Based on the problems identified by the employees in QTEL the following solutions are recommended: 1) QTEL should conduct Training Programs on organizational knowledge management for employees; 2) QTEL should adopt team activities and socialization programs for employees; 3) Communication between the management and employee should be easy and smooth; 4) Implement a mechanism to clarify the doubts of employees on company's rules and regulations.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the conclusions are as follows: 1) Organizational Knowledge Management and work performance in QTEL needs more improvement on organizational structure; 2) Organizational Knowledge Management and Work Performance in QTEL is effective but needs further enhancement; 3) The hypothesis of the study is accepted on the different variables of the study.

Table 1: Status and Level of Significance of the Organizational Knowledge Management with the work Performance in terms of Organizational Structure

Status of OKM		Organizational Structure	Level of significance of the OKM with the work performance	
Description	Wtd.Mean		Wtd.Mean	Description
Agree	3.71	Organizational structure and command of leadership in Qtel is well defined and implemented.	4	Effective
Agree	3.63	There is free flow of communication from the highest down to the lowest level of the organizational structure.	3.8	Effective
Agree	3.89	Qtel Directors have the direct supervision on their respective departments.	3.7	Effective
Agree	3.72	Qtel Directors are the one in-charged in evaluating the employee's performance based on the assigned tasks given at the beginning of the year.	3.6	Effective
Moderately agree	3.31	Employee's promotion is based on educational background and performance	3.7	Effective
Agree	3.65		3.8	Effective

Table 2: Status and Level of Significance of Organizational Knowledge Management with Work Performance in terms of Organizational Culture

Status of OKM		Organizational Culture	Level of significance of the OKM with the work performance	
Description	Wtd. Mean		Wtd. Mean	Description
Agree	4	Muslim employees are allowed to have a prayer break 15 to 20 minutes everyday	3.9	Effective
Moderately agree	3	Non- Muslim employees are given one day off during Christmas	3.5	Effective
Moderately agree	3.2	Qtel employees are strictly observing the wearing of company traditional clothes (tob or abaya) or corporate attire	3.4	Moderately effective
Agree	3.5	Qtel company is highly observing the queueing priority to all customers regardless of their status and nationality.	3.9	Effective
Agree	3.5	Employees observe teamwork within their respective department and inter department.	3.9	Effective
Moderately agree	3.4	**Average**	3.8	Effective

Table 3: Status and Level of Relation of Organizational Knowledge Management and Work Performance terms of Technological Know- how

Status of OKM		Technological Know-How	Level of significance of the OKM with the work performance	
Description	Wtd.Mean		Wtd.Mean	Description
Agree	3.6	Qtel IT employees' share and transfer knowledge with each other without any reluctance.	3.7	Effective
Agree	3.8	Qtel IT provides employees an easy access to company information using an internal website and other channels.	3.5	Effective
Agree	3.7	Qtel IT provides all employees training on the use of software to access required information in various departments.	4	Effective
Agree	3.7	Qtel uses the latest technologies for sharing knowledge to different levels of staff.	4	Effective
Moderately agree	3.3	Deserving employees are sent abroad to gain new technological knowledge so as to abreast the company with the latest technological know- how.	3.6	Effective
Agree	3.6	**Average**	3.8	Effective

Table 4: Status and Level of Relation of Organizational knowledge management and Work Performance in terms of Policies

Status of OKM		Organizational Policies	Level of significance of the OKM with the work performance	
Description	Wtd.Mean		Wtd.Mean	Description
Moderately agree	3.3	Qtel employees are all Knowledgeable about the organizational policies	3.8	Effective
Agree	3.6	Qtel officers see to it that company policies and regulation are well implemented.	4	Effective
Agree	3.8	Qtel directors monitor the implementation of company policies through close supervision.	4	Effective

Agree	3.7	Warning letter will be issued to employees who violate company policies for first offense.	3.6	Effective
Agree	3.8	All forms of discrimination are highly prohibited in Qtel.	3.9	Effective
Agree	3.6	**Average**	3.9	Effective

Table 5: Significant Relationship between Status & Level of Relationship of Organizational Knowledge Management with Work Performance

Indicator	Paired Test	Mean	N	Sig. (2-tailed	Description
Organizational Structure	Perception on the status	3.7	104	0.391	Statistically not significant
	Level of effectiveness	3.8	104		
Organizational Culture	Perception on the status	3.4	104	0.058	Statistically not significant
	Level of effectiveness	3.7	104		
Technological Know How	Perception on the status	3.6	104	0.189	Statistically not significant
	Level of effectiveness	3.8	104		
Organizational policies	Perception on the status	3.6	104	0.127	Statistically not significant
	Level of effectiveness	3.9	104		

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