Assessment of Knowledge Management Readiness in Hotel Sector in Sri Lanka: Modeling Enablers and Process of Knowledge Management

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Abstract

Knowledge Management (KM) has been considered as a competitive tool. Thus, the effective implementation of KM plays a vital role in improving the performance of the institutions. Hotel sector as a knowledge-based service providers KM practices become imperative. The main objective of this study is to assess the KM readiness of Sri Lankan hotel segment and how can manage KM enablers and process and applies systematically. Primary data collected through a survey using questionnaire. 253 usable questionnaires were redeemed for analysis from managerial level employees of hotels in Sri Lanka. KM enablers scale consisted four factors while process scale consisted six factors in the analysis. The study found that there is a strong positive impact of KM enablers scale factors on KM process scale factors. KM enablers are the critical success factors of KM implementation in hotel sector in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Knowledge management, KM enablers, KM process, hotel sector*

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the key pillars of the economy of Sri Lanka, as it contributes for the development of economy, and employs a vital number of workers, that are main part of effectiveness of tourism industry. According to Mantas (2016) as study provides the empirical study of service-based companies which including tourist companies, which designated the knowledge management (KM) can become very handful in the period of economic turmoil. It can support a firm to build novel ideas, to become experience-based company and find solutions that is equipped to provide innovations.

Notwithstanding, KM can be zed on various other sorts of tourist services. KM systems can provide a solution to tourist companies and its officers to create their inquiries lighter but also to safeguard the top-notch quality of their products. (Thomas and Wood, 2014).

The best suiting working condition is the one that harmonizes the satisfaction of the business objective with workers needs that the decision-making team figures each time. Investigating how to indulgence a staff as a separate individual and positioning him in a working group as a vigorous member with the intention of maximizing her / his best job

performance on the one hand, and instantaneously satisfying him is ideal mixture for outstanding a balance between performance and positive psychology in the role as an employee.

Hotel industry is a service-based sector of industry. This implies the nature of the administrations gave and the final product depends a great deal on the human assets and empowering agent and process capacities of KM of the hotels. KM can underwrite into a fruitful and compelling administration of the learning to get upper hand (Nieves & Segarra, 2015).Hotel corporate is likewise a specialist co-op, where the human factor as a gainful factor "work" assumes a focal role and in this manner, representatives have an unmistakable position between beneficial assets and can lead them to monetary achievement. This is on the grounds that the workers are the connection of the hotel business with the client and through their contact with the client they speak to the entire picture of the hotel (Cohen& Olsen, 2015). Then again,hotel sector should be prepared with other essential framework capacities, for example, empowering influences and process abilities of KM. In this manner, the successful routine with regards to KM. The organization's procedure ought to be formed so that it lined up with KM capacities to give great services. A pivotal component is the capacity of the hotel to exploit the information that its workers have grown yet additionally to enhance the empowering influences of KM process.

Thus, the motivation behind this research is to look at the instance of how the Sri Lankan hotel segment can exploit the KM and create KM strategies and applies with methodically recognized and evaluated empowering agents and process capacities of KM.

II.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mohammadi et al. (2009) described that, actualizing KM in an association require huge authoritative essentials. Lacking appropriate foundations and essential, make the KM procedure unsuccessful, as well as might acquire destructive impacts also. To diminish such dangers, he proposed to present the preparation appraisal, so as to check an organization's hunger for the work engaged with actualizing the KM. Bhusry and Ranjan (2011) expressed that Information Technology based KM intercession in HEIs can turn out to be a promising techno the board device to improve execution in the indispensable territories of instructing and learning, look into and managerial administrations. In light of the examination results the creators have displayed a reasonable structure for execution of KM frameworks in higher instructive organizations.

At the other hand Sharizaet al.(2012) made clear attempt to explore the KM availability by utilizing KM SECI forms in Sri Lankan media transmission industry. The KM SECI forms comprised of socialization, externalization, internalization, combination. The inquire about finding demonstrated that the all four factors of the deliberate to be included in KM SECI forms risen as critical and dependable measures for KM status. The inquire about finding too uncovered that the optimistic level of purposeful among the representatives within the Sri Lankan media transmission industry to be included in KM forms

According to Akhavanet al.(2012) firms' processes and infrastructure are not suitable for applying KM, and thus the financial and human resources will be misused. They continued with statement that it is important that firm develop their attitude in this sector before application of the KM. Moreover, they classify the critical effectiveness factors of KM like a management support, knowledge strategy and structures, commitment, performance measurement, investment, organizational learning, motivation, communication, collaboration and team working, operation integration, security and technical infrastructures.

Notwithstanding, Pradanet al.(2015) stated that when top manager leaves the firm, knowledge will disappear and the competitive advantage of company will be missed. He further opined that when a key employee leaves the organization, knowledge will disappear and the competitive advantage of the organization will be lost. He further stated that the KM System is alluded as data framework that connected to oversee authoritative information by supporting and improving the hierarchical procedure of learning creation, stockpiling/recovery, exchange, and application. Based on proposal byOjo (2016)a theoretical model for usage of KM in Nigerian colleges so as to drive advancement and execution. In light of writing overview from the past looks into, he has built up the applied model portraying manners by which colleges can embrace KM practices and techniques so as to advance development and enhance execution of colleges.

According to Youssef et al. (2017) inspected the effect of: transparency and trust; top administration bolster; and the reward framework on learning sharing conduct in different ventures in Saudi Arabia. They additionally researched how learning sharing strategy of corroborative aspect investigation via structural equation modeling. Before going in to the point by point displaying, the components taken for research are tried for legitimacy through estimation models through AMOS programming. The outcomes for every factor are being talked about in this part.

III. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS SCALE

Creating Knowledge

Each scholastic organization adds to information creation. The primary wellsprings of information creation in advanced education institutions are through instructive and research and educational activities, learning and innovation. The scholastic institutions are considered as "Information Houses" where learning streams from educators to students and new information is made (Dhamdhere, 2015).

Capturing Knowledge

Information catch is the procedure by which learning is changed over from implicit to explicit frame (positioning within individuals, organizational entities or artifacts) and the other way around through the sub-procedures of internalization and externalization (Becerra-Fernandez &Sabherwal, 2010).

Organizing Knowledge

The information captured is required for separating, cross posting and coordinating distinctive sources and kinds of information as per the need of the association. Arranging theinformation is useful to survey the information all the time so as to keep the information for current and up and coming.

Storing Knowledge

Information might be tacit or explicit. explicit information is once put away in reports and other stockpiling frameworks. It very well may be expressed and shared. Tacit knowledge then again is ease put away in the human personalities and incorporates the practice, intellect, considerations, instincts (Sharma &Kaur, 2016). The instructive institutionsuses databases, information technology applications and archives to store information for simple access to all.

Disseminating Knowledge

The Knowledge sharing is conceived as a characteristic movement of the educational institution as the quantity of workshops, meetings and distributions by scholastics is far surpassing some other calling, meaning the enthusiasm of scholastics to share knowledge (Cheng et al., 2013). The libraries, asset focus, web and intranet and different discussions to show, are utilized in

educational institution to disperse information among the students and members.

Applying Knowledge

The knowledge created in higher educational institutions is devoured by employees, understudies, organization, and scientists. The motivation behind information the executives is to make, create, store, share and apply it viably to accomplish the vital destinations of the association. The utilization of information is to empower learning and advancement as wellsprings of competitive advantage.

Knowledge Management EnablersScale

Knowledge Management Enablers (KME) isthe organizers which underpins the procedure of knowledge executive adequately. KME factors have the ability to direct usage of data management in the association. In view of writing review, it was discovered that there are in excess of 30 KME's were talked about in different research considers (Kumar et al., 2014). From these empowering influences, there are four empowering influences are considered as most imperative KME's, for example, innovation (KME-1), organizational structure (KME-2), joint effort (KME-3) and Trust (KME-4) (Lee, 2017). So as to perceive how over four elements are adding to KMEs Scale, the scientists sent the system of corroborative factor examination through auxiliary equation modeling. Before going into the point by point modeling, the components taken for research are tried for legitimacy through estimation models through AMOS programming. The outcome for every factor is being talked about in this part.

Technology

The information technology assumes an indispensable job in encouraging KM rehearses in the association. The critical job of data innovation is its capacity to help information correspondence, joint effort, learning exchange and empower

cooperation in the association. The information technology that is a piece of successful KM can be arranged into two sorts: communication advances, for example, electronic emails, electronic announcement sheets, video conferencing, and PC conferencing, and basic decision-making innovation, for example, expert systems, executive information systems and decision support systems (Allamehet al., 2011).

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure is one of thekey enablers in effective implementation of KM in an organization. The organizationalstructure defines the relationship ofvarious departments, divisions and the hierarchyof the organization. The organizational structuresfacilitate knowledge infrastructure support,structural flexibility, freedom, scope and teamwork for effective knowledge sharing, coordinationand across the organization (Sharma &Kaur, 2016).

Collaboration

The cooperative practices in the association give the chance to the correspondence of thoughts and information among the workers. It is useful to information sharing and learning transfer actions in the association. Joint effort comprises of the blend of coordination, communication and cooperation. Communication is identified with the trading of thoughts and data among the workers in the association. Coordination is identified with the administration of workers' resources and activities, and cooperation is identified with the generation occurring on a common space (Yahia etal., 2012).

Trust

Trust is one of the essential factors that influence the relationship among the all population. It prompts cooperating and coordinated effort among the workers in the association. Disappointment in trust makes

hindrances to stream of data and learning covering in the association. The achievement of KM activities dependent on the trust value of representatives towards the executives of the association.

IV.   METHODOLOGY

Primary data collected through a survey using questionnaire. 253 usable questionnaires were redeemed for analysis. Managerial level employees of hotels in Sri Lanka responded to the survey questionnaire. Convenient sampling method used in selecting respondents.

The overall measurement model was predicted by using structural equation model by assessing the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The convergent and discriminant validity were assessed for further model examination.Further, a hypothesis was developed to examine the impact of KM enablers on KM process.

Measurement Model

The convergent validity of the measurement model was assessed and the results indicated that the value of AVE showed between 0.728-0.925, composite reliability between 0.71-0.93 and the loading items were between 0.534-0.982 which confirm the convergent criteria validity.   In assessing internal reliabilities of scale, the coefficient of Cronbach alpha's value depicted that the higher consistency with the valuesof 0.79 to 0.85. Table 1, represents factor loadings of items, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, composite reliabilities, AVE and for all the measurement items in the measurement model. In order to proceed with further analysis, the discriminant validity was established based on the rule of the square root of AVE is greater than correlation of constructions.Hence, convergent and discriminant validity confirms strong constructs validity.

Table 1: Factor loading of items

Construct	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbacs' Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Technology	KIT1	.894	0.76	0.81	0.708
	KIT2	.875			
	KIT3	.775			
	KIT4	.720			
Organizational Structure	KIS1	.718	0.81	0.93	0.720
	KIS2	.938			
	KIS3	.771			
	KIS4	.840			
Collaboration	KICol1	.725	0.85	0.71	0.799
	KICol2	.828			
	KICol3	.643			
	KICol4	.895			
Trust	KITr1	.834	0.72	0.78	0.847
	KITr2	.788			
	KITr3	.929			
	KITr4	.967			
Creating Knowledge	KPCr1	.689	0.75	0.83	0.907
	KPCr2	.982			
	KPCr3	.761			
	KPCr4	.864			
Capturing	KPCp1	.667	0.81	0.92	0.781

Knowledge	KPCp2	.826			
	KPCp3	.961			
	KPCp4	.768			
Organizing	KPOr1	.933	0.85	0.91	0.925
Knowledge	KPOr2	.877			
	KPOr3	.931			
	KPOr4	.796			
Storing	KPSt1	.753	0.83	0.87	0.837
Knowledge	KPSt2	.669			
	KPSt3	.645			
	KPSt4	.846			
Disseminating	KPDs1	.534	0.79	0.82	0.851
Knowledge	KPDs2	.621			
	KPDs3	.846			
	KPDs4	.828			
Applying	KPAp1	.630	0.83	0.75	0.726
Knowledge	KPAp2	.826			
	KPAp3	.679			
	KPAp4	.924			

Table 2: Model Validity Measures

	COLL	TECH	STRC	TRST	KCap	KCre	KOrg	KSto	KDis	KApp
COLL	0.847									
TECH	0.432***	0.799								
STRC	0.787***	0.448***	0.833							
TRST	0.310***	0.467***	0.396***	0.834						
KCap	0.344***	0.274***	0.356***	0.310***	0.781					
KCre	0.344***	0.428***	0.324***	0.713***	0.387***	0.723				
KOrg	0.326***	0.379***	0.317***	0.329***	0.662***	0.398***	0.885			
KSto	0.459**	0.350**	0.473**	0.415**	0.673**	0.516**	0.882**	0.887		
KDis	0.652***	0.511***	0.631***	0.349***	0.399***	0.347***	0.395***	0.559**	0.687	
KApp	0.606***	0.424***	0.496***	0.451***	0.321***	0.424**	0.317***	0.432**	0.671***	0.818

Structural Model

Structural Equation Modeling was employed through Path analysis to examine the impact of Knowledge Management Enablers (KMEs) on Knowledge Management Process (KMP). Path analysis is a method employed to determine whether or not a multivariate set of non-experimental data fits well with a particular causal model. Table 3, shows that the good fit indexand the rule of thumb of the CFA measurement model with scores and recommended cutoffvalue confirm that the measurement model was fit for testing hypotheses identified in this study.

Table 3:Good of Fit Index and their Rule of Thumb

Index	Shorthand	Rule of Thumb	Author	Value Obtained	Conclusion
Chi-square / Degree of Freedom	χ2 / df	≤ 3	(Kline, 1998)	2.418	Good Fit
Root Mean Square Residual	RMR	<0.02		0.025	Good Fit
Goodness-of-fit Index	GFI	>0.90	(Joreskog&Sorbom, 1981)	0.913	Good Fit
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	>0.90	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.924	Good Fit
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	>0.90	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.931	Good Fit
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	≤ .05; good	(Wan, 2002)	0.042	Good Fit

Based on the above findings, the model shows an overall good fit.The confirmatory factor analysis showed an acceptable model fit and hence, the theorized model fit well with the observed data. It can be concluded that the hypothesized CFA model fits the sample data very well and the model is fit to be used in the analysis.

Path Analysis

To evaluate the structural models' predictive power, R squares (R2) were calculated.

Hence, the exogenous variable (KMEs) explained 82% of the variance in endogenous variable (KMPs). Using a bootstrapping technique with a re-sampling of 2000, the path estimates and t-statistics were calculated for the hypothesized relationships. From the analysis it was found that the hypothesis showing the direct relationship between the constructs.The findings are shown in Table 4 below.
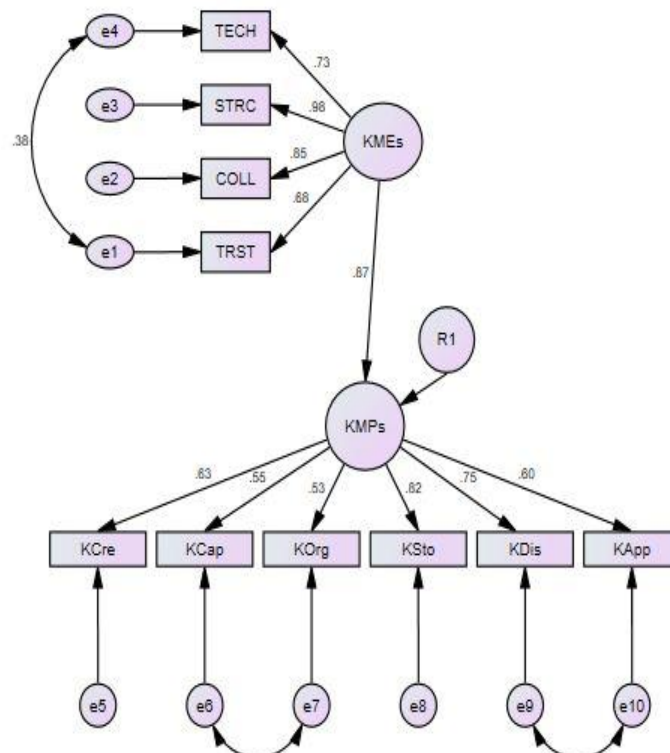

Figure 1.1: Path Diagram

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing – Direct Relationship

Hypothesis	Beta	SE	t-value	P – Value	Results
KMPs <--- KMEs	0.816	0.124	6.584	0.000	Accepted

V.   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study on the KM readiness provides a unique perspective from the hotel sector in Sri Lanka. The hotels readiness for implementing the KM has been studied based on the survey using questionnaire with the support of Hotel's Managers' opinion on Creating, Capturing, Organizing, Storing, Disseminating, and Applying knowledge for effective implementation of KM practices in the hotels. It was found that lack of involvement of hotel management and lack of investment on necessary enablers of KM. The management should take steps for effective and efficient pre-arrangement of KM enablers such as organizational structure, technology, collaboration and trust in such a way the implementation of KM brings reasonable returns to hotels and gain competitive edge. The KM enablers are the critical success factors of KM implementation in hotel sector. The hotel management should create conducive environment for knowledge sharing practices since the employees play vital role in knowledge sharing in the hotels, meantime the KM enablers such as trust and collaboration have foremost role in among the employees. Hence, top management of hotels should create trust and loyalty among the employees. The modern technology and active application of information and communication technologies also play a significant role in the effective implementation of KM practices.

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