



## **KNOWLEDGE CREATION AND PERFORMANCE AT THE TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION HEAD QUARTERS IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objectives of the study were to examine Knowledge Creation and its effects on performance at the Teachers Service Commission, Nairobi City County, Kenya. This study was conducted in selected Teachers Service Commission Headquarters offices. The study used descriptive survey research design and employed both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The target population comprised 2475 employees of the Teachers Service Commission handling records. Random sampling was used to select a sample of professionals in the selected offices within the departments. Descriptive statistical techniques composed of frequencies, percentages, means and variance was used to analyze the data from questionnaires which assisted in the interpretation of data done by use of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29.0. The researcher also used structured questionnaires as data collection tool. Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to do inferential data analysis to analyze knowledge management processes and performance at the Teachers Service Commission Headquarters in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study was guided by some models such as the organizational Learning theory, and knowledge-based theory for further analyzing and comparison of data facilitation whereby data was presented by use of a range of tools, such as diagrams, charts, and graphs. The findings were presented by use of tables for further analysis. The study pointed out that the organization had existing procedures for acquiring knowledge about stakeholders which was prepared and used for both digital and manual work at the commission. The study concluded that knowledge creation had a positive impact on the performance at the Teachers Service Commission. The study recommended that the Teachers Service Commission designs clear policies geared towards ensuring that all levels of managers meet the performance standards of the current technological era for the realization of digital literacy in the TSC management as a core 21<sup>st</sup> century competency skill.

**Key Words:** Knowledge Management Processes, Performance, Teachers Service Commission, Knowledge Creation

## Background to the study

In the Knowledge era in which we live, the ability to create, acquire, share, transfer, disseminate and efficiently manage the flow of knowledge is amicably necessary to influence knowledge (Wahba, 2015). Knowledge management has recently gained a growing attention to enhance and support knowledge creation and knowledge sharing within organizations for achieving better organizational performance (Chowdhury, 2017). Lee and Choi (2018) argued that a renewed conducive environment in an organization is mainly driven by continuous introduction of new management theories such as knowledge management processes which have been recognized as important tools for the running of businesses more successfully.

Performance of organizations is critical for the survival of an organization, as it always has a significant influence on the organization's activities simply because it is considered to depend heavily on the quality of performance by the employees. The drive to manage knowledge in African culture is characterized by an old African proverb that states in Africa that, when an old man dies, the entire library is burnt because he has what entails to be powerful and people who have it are considered to be powerful because they have what it takes to be powerful in sharing knowledge which is the cornerstone of reputation and influence Mures, (2018).

Knowledge Management being a discipline of knowledge has been defined in various ways by scholars globally over the years and it is viewed as the key differentiator between firms since the 1990s Drucker, (2018). The concept of knowledge management is again anchored in management processes of a growing number of organizations (Malhotra, 2019). Information and knowledge interchangeably work together and are naturally inseparable whereby Knowledge Management manages knowledge and information that is spread among employees at different levels and the main concern then should be how Knowledge Management processes can be best achieved and employed in the day to day running of organizations for present and future use. (Wang & Braedley, 2019).

The concept of knowledge management processes emerged to break down and understand the concept of knowledge management which may involve identifying valuable information or ideas to better organizational performance. Knowledge management processes therefore influence the effectiveness and good performance of both employees and the organization that they serve (Bass & Riggio, 2018).

## Statement of the Problem

Knowledge management processes have in the recent past been recognized as the organizations' most important asset since today's world is described as that of knowledge economy but faced by many challenges and complications (Gituma & Dlamini, 2017). Researchers have ascertained that despite the rising popularity of knowledge management across different organizations the world over, knowledge management has not received much attention in many organizations. According to a recent study of 41,700 managers in 42 countries among them Angola, South Africa, U.S.A, Japan among others, 22% of them cited lack of experience and deep smarts as a key challenge (Aon's 2015).

Trends in Global Employee Engagement report confirms that the average employee's work expertise and experience have dropped by 38% since 2013. More than 40% of the hiring managers are struggling to find or retain the talent they need, and managers often don't know what they have lost until after the experts leave and by then, it may be difficult to recover. This begs the question as to whether the Teachers Service Commission is well equipped to maintain employee work expertise and experience through proper knowledge management processes.

In Kenya, a daily nation newspaper report on civil servants mass retirement (2019) found out that over 50,000 civil servants in state corporations had exited service following a mass retrenchment of government staff employees and that the most affected were staff in senior

management levels with critical talents, skills and competencies leading to what Sanchez (2017), terms as invaluable loss of an all-important and critical tacit knowledge, which is complicated to extract from the heads of individuals hence becoming very difficult to transfer, manage and share.

Between 2015 and 2021, some 700 senior management employees exited service either through retirement, resignations, natural attrition or through transfer of service to other government agencies and non-governmental bodies. This represents 18% of the senior management workforce at the Teachers Service Commission and whose exit leaves a huge dent in terms of employee work expertise and experience. This huge loss of expertise means unprecedented loss in the crucial knowledge, talent and skills which would otherwise be valuable in the employee competency and the subsequent service delivery at the Teachers Service Commission.

This puts performance at the Teachers Service Commission as a state corporation into perspective perhaps underpinning the important attention it needs to efficiently discharge its services to its clientele satisfactorily and effectively. It is therefore against this background that this research sought to find out the effectiveness of knowledge management processes and performance at the Teachers Service Commission's headquarters in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

### **Objective of the Study**

- i. To examine Knowledge Creation and its effects on Performance at the Teachers Service Commission, Nairobi City County, Kenya

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

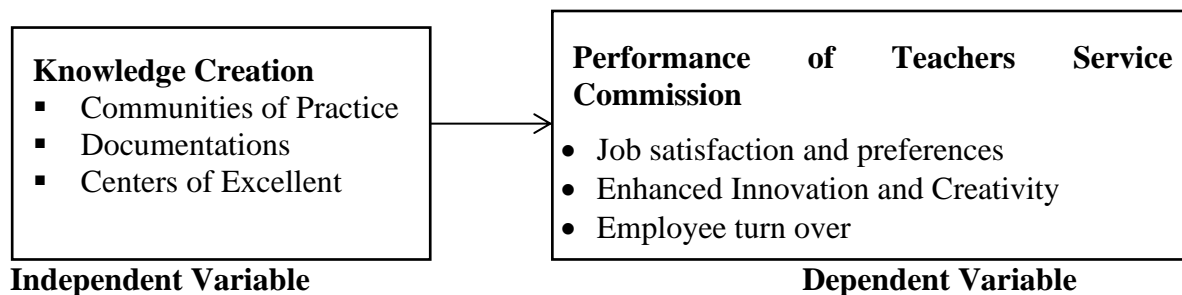
### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Organizational Learning Theory**

The theory of organizational learning focuses on the creation of knowledge and its use within an organization. Learning happens when people interact while finding and solving problems. (Argrys & Schon, 2017). This means that whenever expected outcome differs from actual outcome, an individual or groups of people engage in organizational inquiry to understand and solve this inconsistency. In the process, individuals interact with other members of the organization and hence learning takes place only because new knowledge has been acquired and generated. Argrys and Schon (2017), emphasize that the approach to organizational learning theory is based on the understanding of two often conflicting modes of operation that is Espoused theory and Theory-in-use for formalization and actual way things are done to solve problems.

#### **Conceptual Framework**

This is a model of presentation in which the researcher seeks to represent the relationship between variables in study. The conceptual framework shows what this specific study expects to find out of the research to be conducted. It defines the relevant variables that is dependent and independent for the study mapping out how they might relate to each other. An independent variable is that variable which is presumed to affect or determine dependent variable and a dependent variable is that variable dependent on another variable. The independent variable in this study is knowledge creation, which when employed appropriately will impact on the performance at the TSC. The dependent variable in the study is the performance at the TSC. The conceptual framework as illustrated in figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**

### **Knowledge Creation**

Knowledge creation occurs when a unit generates knowledge that is new to it whereby organizations create knowledge and use it. It attracts information based on their interaction with environment and transform it into knowledge. This knowledge is then combined with values, internal rules and regulations in order to reach a basis for their measures (Davenport & Prusak, 2016). The creation of new knowledge may come from within or without an organization. The process of knowledge creation within an organization may be through learning, research and development, tacit knowledge through experience accumulation, interactions with suppliers and customers, and learning by doing. Knowledge can also be created through organizational applications like electronic documentation management systems and innovations such as introduction of new programmes, new ideas as well as encouraging creativity and innovativeness amongst members of staff.

Communities of Practice are made up of individuals who are mindful in taking care of one another in a networking capacity whereby individuals acquire tacit knowledge through learning by doing (Song & Sun, 2018). This is knowledge is documented, stored and applied for current and future use in an organization. Similarly, knowledge creation can also be done through centres of excellence, where research on certain fields of knowledge may be researched, created and documented for use by relevant organizations.

The creation of knowledge has become an increasingly important factor in competitiveness in many organizations. Knowledge creation represents a focus on the content of the knowledge that has been and is being created. It concerns how different types of knowledge can be created individually and collectively through different social and cognitive processes of action and interaction (Nonaka et al., 2017).

### **Performance at the Teachers Service Commission.**

Performance refers to the execution or achievement of work or other activities for a person, machine, company and so on (Cambridge University, 2020). It is a multi-faceted construct that compares the actual output against intended output (Katou, 2021). It is a mechanism to implement organizational strategy for the purpose of constantly improving the probability levels (Dulanjani & Priyanath, 2020). According to Lee and Ha-Brookshire (2018), an organization that achieves a high level of sustainable performance is more likely to realize the stakeholders' needs, and achieve a higher competitive advantage. Colquitt et al. (2017) contend that job satisfaction and preferences is a gratifying emotional state that arises from ones' appraisal for their job. It represents how employees not only do, but also think about their job. Job satisfaction represents the general attitude, emotions and personal positive feelings that an employee has towards their job. Appreciation and happiness are attributes closely related to job satisfaction (Hutahayan, 2019). A satisfied employee is eager to complete a job to the best their ability while observing high work standards and good performance. This leads to employees' ability to come up with enhanced innovation and creativity and thereby promoting organizational competitive advantage, hence reducing chances of high employee turnover.

## Empirical Literature Review

### Knowledge creation and Performance at the Teachers Service Commission

Knowledge creation involves mobilization of internal and external resources to ensure that there is generation of new knowledge that facilitate the organization to achieve its goals (Nicholas & Steyn, 2017). To ensure that the correct strategies are laid in place, the company may brainstorm and conduct research on the possible strategy to manage knowledge assets of project managements and how to create organizational knowledge bank Tran, (2016). The company may also identify explicit knowledge and knowledge creation to ensure there is enough information on the policies and objective of carrying out a particular project. According to Groop, Ketokivi, Gupta and Holmström (2017) knowledge creation includes identifying tacit from explicit and vice versa.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to establish the knowledge management processes and performance at the Teachers' service commission Kenya. According to Riff, Lacy, and Fico (2013), a descriptive design is concerned with finding out who, what, where and how of the variables, which was the concern of this research.

The study targeted (2475) management staff of the Teachers Service Commission. The target population included managers in all the departments as follows; Administration (543), Human Resource Management and development (492) Staffing (372) Finance and Accounts (237) ICT (534), Internal Audit (27), Legal Labour & Industrial Resolutions (66), Field services (30) and Quality Assurance & Standards (174) across the nine 9 directorates of the TSC.

Purposive sampling was used to select employees from 9 directorates at the Teachers Service Commission Headquarters Nairobi City County, Nairobi for this study. The employees were stratified on the basis of their departments and then systematically random sampling was used to select the individuals who received equal opportunity in giving responses to the research instruments that addressed the study as they assumed to be knowledgeable on the knowledge management aspects within the organization.

**Table 1 Sampling Grid for the employees of the TSC**

DEPARTMENT	Total no. of staff	Sample size	% of sample Size
Administration	543	62	20
Human Resource management and development	492	36	18
Staffing	372	36	13
Finance and Accounts	237	21	8
ICT	534	58	20
Internal Audit	27	27	10
Legal Labour & industrial resolutions	66	6	3
Fields Services	30	3	1
Quality Assurance & Standards	174	18	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2475</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: TSC Records Division (2022)*

This study focused on a total population of 2475 for the researcher to come up with a representative sample, the Nassiuma (2000) formula was adopted to determine a sample of 267. Primary data was used in this study. Questionnaires were the most important and preferred method of primary data collection in this study because it allowed the researcher to reach a large group of population as it is required. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such

as frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. Tables, graphs and charts was used to present the research findings. Inferential data analysis was done using Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 267 questionnaires were administered to the targeted respondents in a sample of 267 respondents and 244 (91%) responded to the questionnaires. The other 23 (9%) respondents did not respond to the questionnaires.

### Responses on Knowledge creation and Performance at the Teachers Service Commission

Knowledge creation involves mobilization of internal and external resources to ensure that there is generation of new knowledge that facilitate the organization to achieve its goals (Nicholas & Steyn, 2017). To ensure that the correct strategies are laid in place, the Institution may barnstorm and conduct research on the possible strategy to manage knowledge assets of project managements and how to create organizational knowledge bank (Tran, 2016). Table 2 below shows statistical responses on Knowledge creation and Performance at the Teachers Service Commission

**Table 2:** Responses of respondents on the perception of Knowledge creation and Performance at teachers' service commission

Variable indicators	SD (%)	D (%)	UN (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mea n	Std. Dev.	Decision
The organization have procedures for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge	0 0%	57 23.5%	28 11.1%	117 48.1%	42 17.3%	3.59	1.03	High perception
The organization have procedures for distributing knowledge throughout the organization both internally and externally.	43 17.3%	15 6.2%	39 16.0%	108 44.4%	39 16.0%	3.36	1.32	Low perception
The organization have procedures for acquiring knowledge on knowledge management processes.	0 0%	12 4.9%	66 27.2%	15 6.17%	16 6.2%	3.69	0.66	High perception
The organization use procedural process for transferring knowledge to individuals within the organization	0 0%	24 9.9%	69 28.4%	121 49.4%	30 12.3%	3.64	0.83	High perception
The organization have procedural process for categorizing knowledge	0 0%	54 22.2%	27 11.1%	124 50.6%	39 16.0%	3.60	1.00	High perception
The organization use the right process for retaining knowledge from within individuals into the organization	0 0%	64 25.9%	42 17.3%	108 44.4%	30 12.3%	3.43	1.01	Low perception

**Note:** N = 6, SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, UN: Undecided (Neutral), A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree. The weighted mean is given by,  $\frac{21.31}{6} = 3.55$

The data analysis shows that majority 163 (66.9%) of respondents, highly perceived that the organization has procedures for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge, the organization has procedures for acquiring knowledge on knowledge management processes. They also had high perception that the organization use procedural process for transferring knowledge to individuals within the organization and that organizations have procedural

process for categorizing knowledge. This positively influences knowledge management processes and performance at the teachers' service commission headquarters in Nairobi City County, Kenya

On the other hand, 81 (33.1%) of respondents had a lower perception that the organization have procedures for distributing knowledge throughout the organization both internally and externally. They also had a lower perception that the organization use the right process for retaining knowledge from within individuals into the organization. Based on these findings, it is clear that knowledge creation is a knowledge management process which positively influenced performance among the staff and had some negative influence on performance of the organization too.

### Responses on performance at the teachers' service commission headquarter

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) of Kenya is an Independent government Commission established under the Constitution of Kenya to manage human resource within the education sector whose performance is influenced by knowledge management processes as presented and discussed above. In this section the researcher used certain indicators of the dependent variable for performance measurement as shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3:** Responses on performance management at the teachers' service commission headquarter

Variable indicators	SD (%)	D (%)	UN (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. dev.	Decision
Knowledge management processes has led to proper management of knowledge creation at the Teachers Service Commission.	0	0	163	81	0	3.33	0.47	Low perception
	0%	0%	66.7%	33.3%	0%			
Knowledge management processes has led to effective knowledge sharing of information at the Teachers Service Commission.	0	0	27	163	54	4.11	0.57	High perception
	0%	0%	11.1%	66.6%	22.2%			
Knowledge management processes has led to efficient knowledge Transfer of information at TSC	0	27	30	163	24	3.75	0.78	High perception
	0%	11.1%	12.3%	66.7%	9.9%			

**Note:** N = 4, SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, UN: Undecided (Neutral), A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree. The weighted mean is given by,  $\frac{14.59}{4} = 3.65$

This data analysis shows that of the majority of respondents 123 (50.6%) appeared to agree or had a higher perception that Knowledge management processes have led to effective knowledge sharing of information at the Teachers Service Commission. They also had a higher perception that knowledge management processes had led to efficient knowledge transfer of information at the TSC. On the other hand, 121 (49.4%) which was a larger number of the respondents had a lower perception that Knowledge management processes had led to proper management of knowledge creation at the Teachers Service Commission. Based on these findings, the Knowledge Transfer and Performance at the Teachers Service Commission at the headquarters was in line with performance measurements obtained.

### Bivariate analysis of the Influence of knowledge creation and performance at the Teachers Service Commission Head Quarters Nairobi City County

The researcher also used SPSS version 29.0 to perform bivariate statistical analysis to help understand the association between the dependent and independent variables of the study so as

to provide further insight into associations and allow for predictive modeling and the results were obtained from the analysis were presented as shown.

The relationship between Knowledge creation and Performance at the Teachers Service Commission are presented in the Table 4 shown below:

**Table 4:** Relationship between some Knowledge management process and Performance at the Teachers' Service Commission headquarters

	Proper management of knowledge creation Chisquare	DF	P values
The organization have procedures for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge	10.957	3	0.012
The organization have procedures for distributing knowledge throughout the organization both internally and externally	17.577	4	0.01
The organization have procedures for distributing knowledge throughout the organization both internally and externally	10.383	3	0.016
The organization have procedures for acquiring knowledge on knowledge management processes.	11.798	3	0.08
The organization use procedural process for transferring knowledge to individuals within the organization	40.994	3	0.01
The organization have procedural process for categorizing knowledge (file)	29.032	6	0.000
The organization use the right process for retaining knowledge from within individuals into the organization	49.060	9	0.001

Study findings in table 4 above indicate that, the organization had procedures for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge and this shows a significant association (Chi-square = 10.957,  $p = 0.012$ ). This suggests that there was evidence that the organization had procedures for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge are different from those without when it came to proper management of knowledge creation, competitive advantage against other state corporations, at TSC as indicators of performance management. Furthermore, there was no significant association between the organization having procedures for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge and the performance management measures ( $p > 0.01$  for all) therefore, the knowledge creation did not differ significantly concerning competitive advantage against other state corporations. In summary, the association and difference between these variables indicate areas where specific knowledge management strategies, measures and actions by all level managers were correlated with variations in the performance at TSC headquarters. This applied to all other indicator of the independent and dependent variables of the study.

## Conclusions

The study concluded that knowledge creation positively impacted knowledge management processes and performance at the Teachers' Service Commission headquarters in Nairobi City County, Kenya. This was because the results had revealed that respondents highly perceived that the organization had procedures for creating new knowledge from existing knowledge, the organization had procedures for acquiring new knowledge on knowledge management processes. The study also concluded that knowledge creation is a knowledge management process that could negatively influence performance since there was a lower perception that the organization had procedures for distributing knowledge throughout the organization both internally and externally. There was also a lower perception that the organization used the right processes for retaining knowledge from within individuals into the organization hence negatively effecting of knowledge creation as a management process on performance.



## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendations for Policy**

The study recommended that the government develops better ICT and Knowledge Management policies that ensure that top, middle and lower level managers at TSC meet the performance standards of the current technological era for realization of digital literacy in TSC management, as a core 21<sup>st</sup> century competency skills. This will enhance knowledge creation both internally and externally. This is due to the fact that technology in 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a key driving force for optimal performance in government organizations. It is imperative that managers in all levels of management be ICT compliant.

The study recommended that the TSC should design policies that provide and support ICT and KM budgets to create its awareness to all managers and to be able to procure and install functional and sustainable favorable infrastructures in the TSC offices for the workers in order to enhance service delivery. A policy to increase government capitation to ICT and KM will enable them meet the costs of required tools alongside other recurrent expenditures in the organization.

The study recommended that policy makers should assess the TSC management at all levels and carry out capacity building of managers to enhance knowledge creation both internally and externally for better organizational performance. Similarly, clear policies on professional development contact hours and the frequency of training should be set by the management.

### **Recommendations for Knowledge Management Processes**

The study recommended that TSC managers should initiate programs and projects for continuous upgrading of knowledge creation in the organization. Managers at all levels should prioritize training of staff under them to be specialists in knowledge management processes to improve work performance. The organization should be able to support managers in attending workshops, seminars and conferences within and outside the country. It was recommended that top managers in their management practices should allow middle and lower level managers to be part of decision making processes in knowledge management processes and performance. The study recommended more funding by the government to the TSC to be able to improve on working conditions for all the managers, structures and performance measures. These managers to collaborate with donors, well-wishers in knowledge management processes for better overall performance.

### **Recommendations for Research**

The findings of this study recommended for use by relevant TSC stakeholders and the government agencies the adoption of basic knowledge management processes to enhance efficiency in performance management at all levels of public institutions. From the findings of this research, scholars and researchers were recommended to carry out more research to ascertain the level of association linking the knowledge management processes and performance at the Teachers Service Commission Headquarters in Nairobi County and in other Counties in Kenya.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

- i. More research be carried out on the knowledge management processes and performance at the Teachers Service Commission Headquarters, Nairobi City County and Sub County levels as they impact on the livelihood of teachers and learners as a result of emerging issues in educational management such as impact of Covid-19 pandemic, floods as well as teachers' strikes in public schools.

- ii. Suggestions for further studies to be done by the TSC on the knowledge management processes and performance at the Teachers Service Commission in a larger sample size to make it more effective for better generalizations in order to draw meaningful conclusions and offer solution on the problem of study.

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