

Effect of Knowledge Sharing Practices on Project Performance, a Case Study of Women for Women International WfWI-Rwanda

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Abstract: Knowledge sharing is a fundamental knowledge management process. The global economy is moving from physical labor to knowledge based. The technology advancements in the recent past have changed management styles. Despite the efforts by all players in a project, many projects in Rwanda face poor or no knowledge sharing practices and thus leading to poor performance. One of the reasons of the bad performance there is poor or no utilization of knowledge sharing and information technology. The research problem therefore was the effect of knowledge sharing practices on the project performance in Rwanda. The main objective of the study was to investigate the effect of knowledge sharing practices on project performance in Rwanda. The study was carried out using descriptive research design. The sample size of the study was all the staff working on the GOAC project. Primary data were collected through the following techniques: interview, questionnaires, and observation among others. Tables were used to summarize data using a layout of rows and columns and choices of when to use them for data presentation depending on advantages of such a table over the use of text. As the findings revealed that the results of correlation between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project were at .609 meaning knowledge communication affects performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project on level of 60.9% which proves a significant relationship between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project. If the researcher considers the level of significance which is 0.05, there is therefore a significant relationship between them because their p-value (0.000) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The researcher therefore concludes a significant relationship between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project. Furthermore; the researcher concludes a positive and significant relationship between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project as the results of correlation between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project was at 0.567 meaning that knowledge collaboration affects performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project at the level of 56.7% which proves a significant relationship between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project. The project managers should effectively put much emphasis in knowledge communication by using appropriate means of sharing knowledge like: employee groupings, formal/ informal meetings, seminars/workshops, emails, personal interaction, brainstorming, job rotation and notice boards so as to ensure knowledge is communicated among the project team. The project managers should also encourage sharing of experiences among teammates and take new employees to orientation programs so as to ensure that people are equipped with the right skills needed for improved quality of services, increased productivity and increased efficiency and effectiveness. All the project stakeholders should foster knowledge collaboration by sharing knowledge through best practices and databases, managing access to knowledge effectively as these lead to improved quality of services, increased productivity and increased efficiency and effectiveness. Last but not least, the researcher recommends the project managers and all parties involved in any project to encourage knowledge absorption, giving opportunity to the project team to acquire new knowledge through trainings and giving opportunity to the project team to upgrade knowledge through job rotation so as to ensure the project team is equipped with the required package knowledge that will lead to the successful performance of projects.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing Practices, Project Performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge sharing is a fundamental knowledge management process. The global economy is moving from physical labor to knowledge based. The technology advancements in the recent past have changed management styles. The dependence on technology has increased manifolds, but main competences are human and his knowledge. In the present information and knowledge era, knowledge has become a key resource that enhances organizational performance. Faced with competition and increasing dynamic enhances environments, organizations are beginning to realize that there is a vast and largely untapped asset diffused around the organization-knowledge (Gupta, 2000). Nonaka (1994) defines knowledge as a justified belief that increases an

entity's capacity for effective action. Nonaka further divides knowledge into tacit and explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge focuses on the knowledge of a person, which comes from experience that is shaped by the beliefs and values of the person. Explicit knowledge is a representative of tacit knowledge in the form of "artefact". An artefact can be a document, an image or a video. It is essential to distinguish between data, information and knowledge. Data consists of raw facts, while information is a flow of messages of interrelated data. Knowledge is actionable information that processes in the human mind and through technology.

Projects mainly considered as temporary which are roughly speaking, not existing after they were finished. In turn knowledge management considers the problems of continuous learning, which cause the problem of knowledge inheritance in project context. At the same time, knowledge is an area of arising interest in organizations and a source of competitive advantage for many companies. Appropriate managing of knowledge is claimed to be able to enhance organizational performance. This knowledge based economies require that knowledge sharing good practices be put in place to improve organization effectiveness. There is a popular saying that knowledge is power. Based on this assertion, it can be said that the management of knowledge is key to power. In Women for Women International (WfWI-Rwanda) which is a nonprofit humanitarian organization that provides practical and moral support to women survivors of war, detailed aspects of Knowledge sharing practices are undertaken with a view of having clear detailed.

Statement of the Problem

Knowledge management sharing practices are said to have a positive effect and able to improve the performance of a project. In Mature organizations project teams will have access to a knowledge based of lessons learned and accepted process for incorporating them into a new project. Knowledge from past projects is accumulated in individual minds (knowledge presentation and competences) and in artifacts (documents and repositories). Framework knowledge is a crucial asset which comes from individual's mind, belief or values and creates value for improving competitive advantage (Drucker, 2009); Hoegl & Schulze, 2005). It is a judgement based on individual beliefs; hence, it varies from one person to another and could not be easily transferred (Nonaka, 1994). According to Alavi and Leidner (2001) knowledge management is a systemic and organizationally specified process for acquiring, organizing and communicating both tacit and explicit knowledge of employees so that other employees may make use of it to be more effective and productive in their work. Despite the efforts by all players in a project, many projects in Rwanda face poor or no knowledge sharing practices and thus leading to poor performance. One of the reasons of the bad performance there is poor or no utilization of knowledge sharing and information technology. The research problem therefore was the effect of knowledge sharing practices on the project performance in Rwanda.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

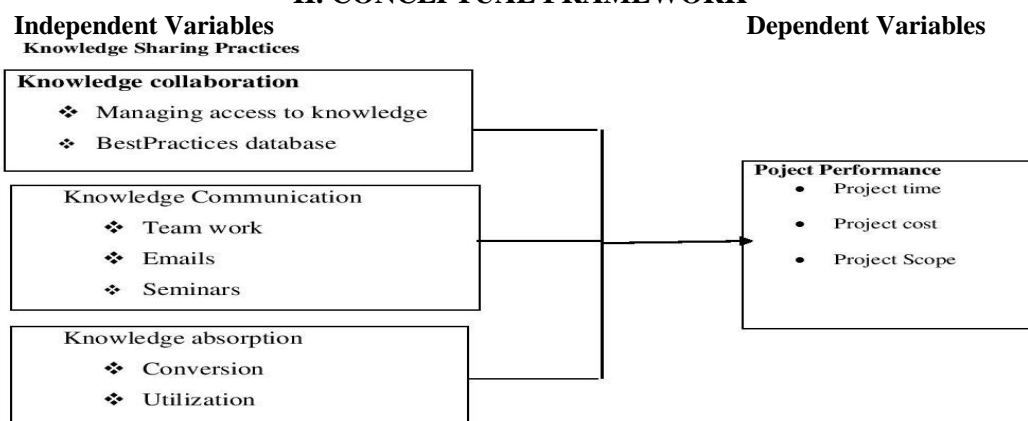
The main objective of the study was to investigate the effect of knowledge sharing practices on project performance in Rwanda.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To investigate the effect of knowledge communication on project performance at WfWI-Rwanda (GOAC project)
2. To determine the effect of knowledge Collaboration on project performance at WfWI-Rwanda (GOAC project).
3. To investigate the effect of knowledge absorption on project performance at WfWI-Rwanda (GOAC project)

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:** In this research a survey method was used. The Survey method is a type of descriptive research where participants answer questions administered through interviews or Questionnaires.
- **Target Population:** The population of the study were employees working in the GOAC project in WFWI-Rwanda which are 24 in total distributed as shown below. Since the population is not too large, a census was used.
- **Sample Size:** The sample size of the study was all 24 staff working on the GOAC project. In this study census technique was used in getting data from different members working on the project. The census technique is described as a complete enumeration of all the items in the population(Kothari, C.R, 2006).
- **Data Collection Instruments:** Primary data were collected through the following techniques: interview, questionnaires, and observation among others
- **Data Analysis:** Data collected were continually transcribed and analyzed right from data collection to presentation stage. Data were organized in a more meaningful and interpretive way to attain the study's objectives. After data collection from the field, data were entered in a computer program (Excel), imported into SPSS, analyzed using SPSS and excel software to allow easy interpretation and analysis.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Demographic data findings

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Female	18	75 %	75 %
Male	6	25 %	100 %
Total	24	100 %	

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 1 show that in 24 respondents involved in this study 75 % of them were female while 25 % were male. As per the findings, it is clear that the majority of respondents involved in this study were female.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by age category

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
20-29 Years	10	41.6 %	41.6 %
30-39 Years	9	37 %	78.6 %
40-49 Years	4	16.6 %	95.2 %
50 and above	1	4.8 %	100 %
Total	24	100 %	100 %

As revealed by the findings in Table 2 41.6 % of all respondents were in the age category of 20-29 years, 37 % of all respondents were in the age category of 30-39 years, 16.6 %, of all respondents were in the age category of 40-49 years while only 4.8 % of all respondents were in the age category of 50 years and above. It is clear that the majority of the respondents involved in this study were young and were the age category of 20-29 years.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by highest education level

Highest Education level	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Diploma	3	12.5 %	12.5 %
Degree	14	58.3 %	70.8 %
Masters	7	29.2 %	100 %
Total	24	100 %	100 %

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 3 revealed that the majority of the respondents which is equal to 58.3 % have acquired a bachelor's degree, 29.2 % of all study participants have acquired the Master's degree while only 12.5 % of all respondents have acquired a diploma. It is clear that all of the respondents involved in this study were able to read and respond the questions addressed in the questionnaire and interview guide.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by working experience

Working experience	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Less than 1 year	4	16.6 %	16.6 %
1-4 years	10	41.6 %	58.2 %
5-10 years	8	33.4 %	91.6 %

More than 10 years	2	8.4 %	100 %
Total	24	100 %	100 %

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from Table 4 revealed that 16.6 % of all respondents have served the project in a period less than one year, 41.6% of all respondents have served the project in a period between one to four years, 33.4 % of all respondents have served the project in a period of five to ten years while only 8.4 % of all respondents have served the project for a period of more than ten years.

Investigation of the effect of knowledge communication on project performance at WfWI-Rwanda (GOAC project)

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on investigation of the effect of knowledge communication on project performance at WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Means of knowledge sharing	24	1.72	.583
Regular sharing of experiences	24	1.63	.926
Orienting new employees	24	1.98	.859
Normal held of seminars	24	1.72	.591
Valid N (listwise)	24		

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from the table 5 demonstrated that all statements are approximately equal to 2 which is to the code of agree. This means that in general respondents agreed on the effect of knowledge communication on project performance at WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project, the standard deviation of all statements is above 0.5 meaning that respondents' answers on these statements were far different from the mean, in other words, their answers to the statement were heterogeneous. This means that respondents' views on the above statements were varied.

Table 6: Correlation between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project

Variables		Knowledge Communication	Performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project
Knowledge communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.609**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	43	43
Performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project	Pearson Correlation	.609**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	24	24

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 6 revealed that the results of correlation between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project were at .609 meaning knowledge communication affects performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project on level of 60.9% which proves a significant relationship between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project. If the researcher considers the level of significance which is 0.05, there is therefore a significant relationship between them because their p-value (0.000) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Determination of the effect of knowledge collaboration on project performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics on Determination of the effect of knowledge collaboration on performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sharing knowledge through best practices	24	1.91	.750
Managing access to knowledge effectively	24	1.74	.581
Improved quality of services	24	1.81	.500
Increased quality of services	24	1.58	.499
Increased efficiency and effectiveness	24	1.68	.576
Valid N (listwise)	24		

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from Table 7, all statements are approximately equal to 2 which is the code of agree. This means that in general respondents have agreed on the effect of knowledge collaboration on project performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project. The standard deviation of all statements is above 0.5 meaning that

respondents' answers on these statements were far different from the mean, in other words, their answers to the statement were heterogeneous. This means that respondents' views on the above statements were varied.

Table 8: Correlation between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project

Variables		Knowledge collaboration	performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project
Knowledge collaboration	Pearson Correlation	1	.567**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	24	24
performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project	Pearson Correlation	.567**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	24	24

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 8 revealed that the results of correlation between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project was at 0.567 meaning that knowledge collaboration affects performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project at the level of 56.7% which prove a significant relationship between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project. If the researcher considers the level of significance which is 0.05, there is therefore a significant relationship between them because their p-value (0.000) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Investigation of the effect of knowledge absorption on performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics on investigation of the effect of knowledge absorption on performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Encouraging knowledge absorption	24	1.53	.505
Practicing knowledge acquisition	24	1.56	.502
Opportunity to acquire new knowledge	24	1.23	.480
Opportunity to upgrade knowledge	24	1.44	.491
Valid N (listwise)	24		

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from Table 9 showed that the mean values for knowledge absorption and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project are respectively rounded off to 2 the code for agree and performance mean value is respectively rounded off to 1 the code for strongly agree for the effect of knowledge absorption. The standard deviation of all statements is less than 0.5 meaning that respondents' answers on these statements were not far different from the mean; in other words, their answers to the statement were homogeneous.

Table 10: Correlation between knowledge absorption and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project

Variables		Knowledge absorption	performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project
Knowledge absorption	Pearson Correlation	1	.951**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	24	24
performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project	Pearson Correlation	.951**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	24	24

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from Table 10 revealed that, the results of correlation between knowledge absorption and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project was at 0.951 mean that knowledge absorption affects performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC Project. If the researcher considers the level of significance which is 0.05, there is therefore a significant relationship between them because their p-value (0.000) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics on Performance of WfW International -Rwanda/GOAC Project

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Meet the set time	24	1.58	.879
Meet the set scope	24	1.26	.492
Meet the set cost	24		

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from Table 11, the mean values for the first and second statements are 1.58 and 1.26 are respectively rounded off to 2 and 1 the code for agree and strongly disagree on performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project, the standard deviation of all statements is above 0.5 meaning that respondents' answers on these statements were far different from the mean, in other words, their answers to the statement were heterogamous. This means that respondents' views on the above statements were varied.

Estimated parameters for knowledge communication, collaboration and absorption and performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project

Table 12: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.953 ^a	.908	.901	.155

Source: Field Data (2018)

- a. Predictors: (Constant), knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption.

The findings from Table12 AnR² = **0.908**, indicate that 90.8% of knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption can be explained by the performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project leaving only 9.2% of the variation in the dependent variable being explained by the error-term or other variables other beyond project management.

Table 13: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	9.249	3	3.083	128.385	.000 ^b
Residual	.937	39	.024		
Total	10.186	42			

Source: Field Data (2018)

Predictors: (Constant), knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption.

- a. Dependent Variable: Performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project. The findings show that the predictors: knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption have an effect on dependent variable which is performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project. This is statistically significant with a p-value (.000).

Table 14: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	.005	.081	Beta	.066	.948
Knowledge communication	.055	.065	.065	.842	.405
Knowledge collaboration	.009	.064	.011	.142	.888
Knowledge absorption	.930	.063	.907	14.691	.000

Source: Field Data (2018)

- a. Dependent Variable:

The results indicate that knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption have statistically significant effect on performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project with a positive coefficient of determination of 0.953 which indicates that there is a strong positive correlation between knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption with performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project. The coefficients of independent variables (knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption). β_1, β_2 and β_3 are respectively 0.055; 0.009 and **0.930** with a statistically significant ($p = 0.00$). Therefore, the model equation derived is: $y = 0.005 + 0.055x_1 + 0.009x_2 + 0.930x_3 + e$. The positive coefficient further demonstrates that a 1% increase in knowledge communication attributed to 0.055% improvement in performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project. The t-statistic value (0.842) indicates the effect is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. An increase of 1% in knowledge collaboration will increase performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project given by

0.009 % at the t-statistic value (0.142) indicates the effect is statistically significant at 95% confidence level while a coefficient demonstrates that a 1% increase knowledge absorption of **0.930** on performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project with a high t-statistic value (14.691) indicates the confidence level of 95% the effect is statistically significant. This demonstrates that performance of Women for Women International -Rwanda/GOAC Project exhibited in terms of knowledge communication, knowledge collaboration and knowledge absorption.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

According to the interpretation of collected and analyzed data during the course of this study the researcher came up with the following conclusions:

- i. As the findings revealed that the results of correlation between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project were at .609 meaning knowledge communication affects performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project on level of 60.9% which proves a significant relationship between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project. If the researcher considers the level of significance which is 0.05, there is therefore a significant relationship between them because their p-value (0.000) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The researcher therefore concludes a significant relationship between knowledge communication and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project.
- i. Furthermore; the researcher concludes a positive and significant relationship between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project as the results of correlation between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project was at 0.567 meaning that knowledge collaboration affects performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project at the level of 56.7% which proves a significant relationship between knowledge collaboration and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project.
- ii. Finally, the researcher concludes a positive and significant relationship between knowledge absorption and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project because the results of correlation between them were at 0.951 which prove a significant relationship between knowledge absorption and performance of WfWI-Rwanda/GOAC project

Recommendations

After analysis and interpretation of data collected during in this academic study, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

- i. The project managers should effectively put much emphasis in knowledge communication by using appropriate means of sharing knowledge like: employee groupings, formal/ informal meetings, seminars/workshops, emails, personal interaction, brainstorming, job rotation and notice boards so as to ensure knowledge is communicated among the project team;
- ii. The project managers should also encourage sharing of experiences among teammates and take new employees to orientation programs so as to ensure that people are equipped with the right skills needed for improved quality of services, increased productivity and increased efficiency and effectiveness;
- iii. All the project stakeholders should foster knowledge collaboration by sharing knowledge through best practices and databases, managing access to knowledge effectively as these lead to improved quality of services, increased productivity and increased efficiency and effectiveness;
- iv. Last but not least, the researcher recommends the project managers and all parties involved in any project to encourage knowledge absorption, giving opportunity to the project team to acquire new knowledge through trainings and giving opportunity to the project team to upgrade knowledge through job rotation so as to ensure the project team is equipped with the required package knowledge that will lead to the successful performance of projects.

Areas for further researcher

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher suggests that future studies to be carried out in the following areas:

- i) Factors affecting knowledge management in government funded projects in Rwanda
- ii) Effect of employee training on success of non-governmental projects in Rwanda

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