

Knowledge Sharing Processes and Performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of knowledge sharing processes on the performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya. Grounded in Social Network Theory, the study employed a descriptive research design with data collected from 189 respondents across five Huduma Centres in Nairobi County, achieving a 93% response rate (176 valid responses). The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between knowledge sharing and performance ($r=0.806$, $p=0.000$), with knowledge sharing accounting for 65% of performance variation in Huduma Centres. Descriptive findings showed that 69.7% of respondents acknowledged existing knowledge sharing mechanisms, with organizations utilizing both digital and manual methods for disseminating knowledge. Regression analysis demonstrated that knowledge sharing had a significant positive influence on performance ($\beta=0.696$, $p=0.000$). The study recommends strengthening knowledge sharing through internal memos, cross-training, and enhanced communication channels to improve service delivery in Huduma Centres.

Keywords: *Knowledge Sharing Processes, Performance, Huduma Centres*

1. Background of the Study

Knowledge sharing has emerged as a critical component of organizational success, particularly in public service delivery institutions. As citizens demand more efficient services, organizations must effectively harness and share knowledge across departments and hierarchies. Knowledge sharing refers to the strategies employed by organizations to transmit knowledge to raise awareness, provide learning opportunities, and prepare for reuse of knowledge across organizations (Govindarajulu & Venkataramaraju, 2017).

Public sector institutions increasingly recognize that they are expected by citizens to share both institutional and employee knowledge to improve services. Recent technological advancements and a highly complicated economic system have forced organizations to implement knowledge sharing practices to keep pace with change and development (Li et al., 2020). Studies by Wambui and Nyamongo (2017) in Kenya found that knowledge sharing positively influenced organizational performance, with factors like organizational culture, leadership support, and incentives playing crucial roles in knowledge sharing processes.

However, the public sector faces unique challenges in implementing effective knowledge sharing practices. According to Okemwa and Smith (2022), the Kenyan civil service remains heavily bureaucratized with few incentives for civil servants to share knowledge and information. Many career civil servants view knowledge sharing negatively, believing that accumulating rather than sharing knowledge increases their individual worth and competitiveness.

In the context of service delivery, Kucharska and Erickson (2019) discovered that knowledge sharing effectiveness was highly dependent on technological infrastructure and IT proficiency within organizations. Their study of 910 knowledge workers revealed that, compared to other industries, IT proficiency had a more significant influence on knowledge sharing outcomes among public service workers.

The Huduma Centre initiative in Kenya, established in 2013 as a Vision 2030 programme, represents a significant effort to transform public service delivery through integrated service platforms. With more than 55 Centers opened across all 47 counties providing over 65 government services (Nyaboke, 2018), effective knowledge sharing has become essential for maintaining service quality and operational efficiency. However, according to the Huduma Kenya Digitization Plan Report (2023), knowledge sharing processes within Huduma Centres are not adequately developed or optimized, resulting in suboptimal performance outcomes.

Therefore, understanding how knowledge sharing practices influence the performance of Huduma Centres becomes crucial for improving public service delivery in Kenya. This study examines this relationship to provide insights for enhancing knowledge sharing processes in public service institutions.

Statement of the Problem

The ever-increasing concern for human rights and information awareness around the world have contributed significantly to citizens' demands for efficient services. As a result, the Kenyan government has made deliberate efforts towards reforming the public sector to enhance performance and inject efficiency in public service delivery (Korir, Rotich & Bengat, 2015). According to Huduma Kenya Digitization Plan Report (2023), Huduma Kenya Service Delivery Programme (HKSDP) is a Vision 2030 Flagship Programme established to transform Public Service Delivery in order to ensure that services are easily accessible and that efficiency, effectiveness, and citizen-centricity are prioritized through One-Stop-Shop platforms. Therefore, Huduma Centres are expected to effectively harness knowledge sharing processes to enhance their overall performance.

However, recent reports reveal that knowledge sharing processes within Huduma Centres are not adequately developed or optimized (Huduma Kenya Digitization Plan Report, 2023). There is a deficiency in systematic approaches to knowledge sharing, resulting in suboptimal performance outcomes (Nkanata & Ocholla, 2022). Despite efforts by the government to improve service delivery, significant hurdles persist. Based on Huduma Kenya Digitization Plan Report (2023), Huduma Centres still experience poor knowledge sharing practices manifested through lack of employee incentivization for sharing knowledge, poor coordination of information flow, and inadequate mechanisms for transferring expertise between experienced and new staff members. Consequently, stakeholders such as government officials, policymakers, service users, and the general public are impacted by the subpar performance of these centres, as it hampers access to efficient and effective services.

According to available literature, both global and local research has explored the connection between knowledge sharing and organizational performance across various contexts. For instance, studies by Waijaya and Suasi (2020) have highlighted the importance of knowledge sharing in enhancing organizational effectiveness. Locally, research by Ong'ayo and Amollo (2019) studied knowledge sharing in the Kenyan context but with limited focus on specific service delivery institutions like Huduma Centres. Moreover, while Wangari and Kamau (2022) examined knowledge sharing in public institutions, their study did not specifically address the unique context of Huduma Centres.

The existing studies on knowledge sharing have primarily focused on private sector organizations or general public institutions, creating a notable research gap regarding knowledge sharing practices in specialized public service delivery centers. Furthermore, studies like those by Waijaya and Suasi (2020) were conducted in different contexts such as Indonesian SMEs, limiting the application of their findings to government service delivery institutions like Huduma Centres in Kenya. Therefore, this study sought to examine how knowledge sharing processes influence the performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya, addressing this crucial research gap in the literature.

Research Objectives

To determine the effect of knowledge sharing on the performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya.

Research Questions

How does knowledge sharing affect the performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya?

2. Literature Review

Social Network Theory

According to Nimmon et al. (2019), the term "SNT" is an umbrella name for theories that concentrate on individuals, teams, and organizations as well as the web of interpersonal interactions that both limit and facilitate human action in these social systems. SNT was first put up by J.A. Barnes in the disciplines of sociology and anthropology in 1953. Barnes highlighted the significance of social structures and the ways in which interpersonal interactions have an impact on people's actions, opinions, and knowledge. The theory looks at the relationships and interactions that occur between people, groups, or organizations. It aims to comprehend how these social structures affect how data, resources, and knowledge move through networks (Burt, 1992). The theory further proposes that the structure of social ties and connections impacts the diffusion of information, the spread of innovations, and the overall performance of individuals or organizations.

According to Burt (1992), individuals in a network who bridge diverse groups and connect otherwise disconnected individuals can access unique information and knowledge that can lead to competitive advantages. Gamper (2022) draws a distinction between strong and weak relationships, observing that strong relationships are defined by things like reciprocity, intense contact, high levels of closeness and emotion, and trust. For instance, family members or even close friends fall under this category. On the other side, weak ties or relations are loose bonds characterized by, for instance, infrequent communication and little intimacy. Examples include acquaintances, coworkers, and casual acquaintances are a few examples.

Hansen, Nohria, and Tierney (1999) investigated how social networks impact information transfer inside firms in the context of knowledge management. They discovered that informal networks

can have a big impact on how quickly information and innovation spread. Krackhardt (1992) contributed to the theory by creating sociograms—visual representations of social networks—to investigate and comprehend the dynamics of interactions within organizations.

Despite its significance, the theory has faced criticism from some scholars. To begin with, Scott (2000) argues that potential oversimplification of complex social interactions leads to negligence of the nuanced nature of social dynamics and informal interactions. Additionally, the theory tends to focus on structural patterns and may overlook the role of individual motivations and preferences in influencing network formation and knowledge exchange (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Scott (2000) further points out that since the theory heavily relies on context-specific data, it becomes challenging to draw universal conclusions. This is because network structures and dynamics can vary significantly across different organizations, industries, and cultural contexts, limiting the generalizability of findings (Scott, 2000).

In this study, the social network theory contributes to understanding the knowledge creation, sharing and application and storage processes and performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya. By exploring the relationships and interactions among employees, managers, and stakeholders within the organization, this study would uncover how knowledge is created, diffused, shared, and utilized to improve performance.

Empirical Literature

In order to better understand how knowledge sharing, work happiness, and IT proficiency characteristics relate to firm success in Poland, Kucharska and Erickson (2019) conducted a study where 910 knowledge workers from various industries who had various responsibilities and degrees of expertise were involved. The results showed that, when compared to other industries, IT proficiency inside a company had a more significant influence on job satisfaction among knowledge workers. Furthermore, when controlling for the IT industry, the study observed a stronger mediating effect of knowledge sharing and job satisfaction in relation to IT operations.

Deng, Huan, and Wobowo (2023) performed a study in Australia. They also developed a conceptual model based on social capital theory to investigate how digital technologies boost knowledge sharing and decision-making through enhanced communication and coordination among individuals within organizations, ultimately resulting in improved job performance. Using structural equation modeling and survey data from Australia, the model was examined and validated. It was discovered that coordination that is technology-driven and knowledge sharing both had a major impression on decision-making. Furthermore, the study concluded that increased knowledge sharing and improved decision-making positively correlate with better job performance in businesses. Asurakkody and Kim (2020) examined the mediating function of self-leadership in Sri Lanka to assess the connection between information sharing and innovative work. 148 nursing students from a public nursing school in Sri Lanka participated in the study. Using a cross-sectional descriptive study, the research revealed a substantial beneficial association between information sharing and creative work practices, with self-leadership serving as the relationship's complete mediator. They concluded that information exchange is essential for developing creative pupils in nursing schools.

Further, a research was conducted by Wambui and Nyamongo (2017) to examine the connection between performance in Kenyan organizations and information sharing. The researchers conducted interviews and surveys in a sample of 10 organizations and analyzed the data using statistical techniques and qualitative content analysis. They established that knowledge sharing

positively influenced performance, and various factors, including culture, leadership support, and incentives, influenced knowledge sharing processes. It was therefore concluded that promoting a culture of knowledge sharing and providing adequate support and incentives can significantly enhance performance.

Ong'ayo and Amollo (2019) studied the role of social networks in knowledge sharing and its impact on performance in Kenya. They employed a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and social network analysis on employees in 15 organizations and analyzed it using statistical techniques and network analysis tools. According to the study findings, both formal and informal social networks played a crucial role in facilitating knowledge sharing. It revealed that employees who were part of dense and diverse social networks were more likely to engage in knowledge sharing behaviors. Therefore, the study recommended that organizations should foster social networks that encourage interaction and knowledge sharing among employees.

Oyaro and Ocholla (2020) examined the relationship between knowledge management processes and performance of the manufacturing sector in Kenya. A survey questionnaire was utilized by the researchers to gather information from 100 manufacturing companies in Kenya. According to the findings, performance in the manufacturing sector was highly influenced by KM methods. Additionally, it showed that businesses with efficient knowledge asset management displayed greater levels of performance.

Conceptual Framework

Kivunja (2018) defines a conceptual framework as a collection of broad concepts and theories that assist in identifying the research problem, developing research objectives and questions, and selecting relevant materials to support the framework. This is as shown in Figure 1.

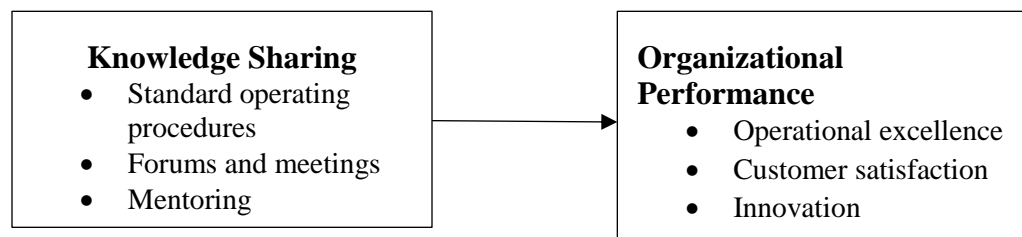


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design to examine the influence of knowledge sharing on performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya. The target population consisted of 360 Huduma Centre staff from five centers in Nairobi County (GPO, City Square, Makadara, Kibra, and Eastleigh), including 10 Centre managers, 23 ICT personnel, and 327 counter service staff. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a sample size of 189 respondents was determined, and participants were selected through random sampling. Data was collected using structured questionnaires administered through a drop-and-pick method, with a pilot test conducted on 18 employees at Thika Huduma Centre to ensure validity and reliability (achieving a Cronbach's alpha threshold of 0.7). The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 23, employing both descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (correlation

and regression analysis). Prior to analysis, diagnostic tests for normality, multicollinearity, linearity, and heteroscedasticity were conducted to ensure the validity of the regression analysis results. The study maintained ethical considerations including informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants.

4. Results and Findings

Response Rate

Out of the 189 respondents chosen for the sample, 176 completed questionnaires were collected. This results in a response rate of 93%, as shown in Table 1. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), a response rate above 70% is considered excellent. Therefore, the 176 responses were deemed excellent and used for further analysis and reporting.

Descriptive Findings

Respondents expressed their agreement levels with statements regarding knowledge sharing within their organizations. The results obtained are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Findings for Knowledge Sharing

Statements; our organization	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Modely agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std Dev
Has mechanisms to foster knowledge sharing by employees	0%	15.2%	15.2%	49.1%	20.6%	3.75	0.953
Allows employees to engage in diverse tasks and duties so that they can share knowledge	15.2%	0%	0%	69.6%	15.2%	3.70	1.197
Utilizes various avenues for disseminating new knowledge, including both digital and manual methods.	4.8%	10.3%	14.5%	44.8%	25.5%	3.76	1.094
Encourages employees to share their experiences so as to pass information to newer staffs	4.8%	10.3%	15.2%	33.9%	35.8%	3.85	1.160
Uses noticeboards as a means of sharing knowledge among all staff members.	10.3%	9.7%	14.5%	45.5%	20.0%	3.55	1.212
Trains staff across various job roles to facilitate the sharing of knowledge	8.2%	5.7%	22.5%	33.0%	30.6%	3.63	0.997
Average						3.73	1.123

The findings in table 1 revealed that 69.7% of the respondents accepted that their company has mechanisms to foster knowledge sharing by employees, whereas 15.2% disagreed with this statement. The mean of these responses was 3.75 demonstrating that most of the respondents

(69.7%) were in agreement with this proposition. These responses were relatively varied as shown by the standard deviation of 0.933. The findings also revealed that 84.8% of respondents agreed that their organization permits employees to participate in diverse tasks and duties so that they can share knowledge, while 15.2% disagreed with this statement. The average of these responses was 3.70 implying that a higher number of the respondents (84.8%) agreed with this statement and these responses were varied as per the standard deviation of 1.197.

The findings also disclosed that 70.3% of the respondents agreed that their organization has diverse channels of sharing new knowledge - both IT/manuals based. On the other hand, 15.1% disagreed with this statement. The mean of responses was 3.76 meaning that most of the respondents (70.3%) agreed with this statement and these responses were differentiated as shown by the standard deviation of 1.094. Additionally, the results indicated that 69.7% of respondents agreed that their organization promotes sharing experiences among employees to pass information to newer staff members, with 15.1% disagreeing. The average score of these responses was 3.85, confirming that a greater number (69.7%) concurred with this statement. These responses showed considerable variation, as indicated by the standard deviation of 1.160.

The findings also highlighted that 65.5% of the respondents agreed that their organization uses noticeboards where knowledge is shared among all the staffs. On the other hand, 20% disagreed with this statement. The average score of responses was 3.55, indicating that a majority of respondents (65.5%) concurred with this statement. These responses exhibited variability, as evidenced by the standard deviation of 1.212. The results also showed that 63.6% of the respondents concurred that their organization trains staff on different tasks in different jobs to share knowledge, while 13.9% disagreed with this statement. The average score of these responses was 3.63, suggesting that a majority of the respondents (63.6%) agreed with this statement though the responses varied noticeably, as indicated by the standard deviation of 0.997.

The findings mirror those of Deng et al. (2023) who found that improved sharing of knowledge and decision-making results in enhanced job performance in businesses. Similarly, the findings collaborate with Wambui and Nyamongo (2017) study that revealed that promoting a culture of knowledge sharing and providing adequate support and incentives can significantly enhance performance in the Kenyan context.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients among various variables: knowledge sharing, and performance. The Pearson correlation evaluates the magnitude and direction of the linear association between two variables, offering insights into how variations in one variable correspond with changes in another.

Table 2: Correlation

Variables		Knowledge Sharing	Performance
Knowledge Sharing	Pearson Correlation	1	.806**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	176	176
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.806**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	176	176

The results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge sharing processes and the performance of Huduma Centres ($r = 0.806$, $p = 0.000$). This is consistent with Kucharska and Erickson (2019), who discovered that knowledge sharing was highly reliant on technology. The findings further align with Wambui and Nyamongo (2017) study that established that knowledge sharing positively influenced performance, and various factors, including culture, leadership support, and incentives, influenced knowledge sharing processes.

Regression Results for Knowledge Sharing and Performance

Table 3: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.806 ^a	.650	.648	.479465

a. Predictors: (Constant), Knowledge Sharing

Table 3 displayed the model summary, which assessed the extent to which variations in the performance could be attributed to changes in knowledge sharing variable. The results indicated that the determining coefficient (R-square) was 0.650. This implies that knowledge sharing accounts for 65% of the variations in performance. Meanwhile, the remaining 35% of the variations are attributed to other factors not analyzed in this model. Consequently, knowledge sharing is a significant factor in explaining the performance of the Nairobi-based Huduma Centres in Kenya. Additionally, the model used to connect knowledge sharing and performance was deemed satisfactory.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	74.413	1	74.413	323.693	.000 ^b
	Residual	40.000	174	.230		
	Total	114.413	175			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Knowledge Sharing

The ANOVA results in table 5 indicated that the overall regression model was statistically significant, demonstrating that knowledge sharing is a strong predictor of performance for the Huduma Centres in Kenya.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. E	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.288	.148		8.674	.000
	Knowledge Sharing	.696	.039	.806	17.991	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Additionally, Table 5 shows that the regression coefficients reveal a positive and significant influence of knowledge sharing on performance ($\beta=0.696$, $p=0.000$). This indicates that a one-unit increase in knowledge sharing results in a 0.696 unit increase in performance.

Discussion

The study showed a positive and significant correlation between knowledge sharing processes and performance of Huduma Centres ($r=0.806$, $p=0.000$). This is consistent with Kucharska and Erickson (2019), who discovered that knowledge sharing was highly reliant on technology. The findings further align with Wambui and Nyamongo (2017) study that established that knowledge sharing positively influenced performance, and various factors, including culture, leadership support, and incentives, influenced knowledge sharing processes.

The findings also revealed that staff learned their roles by sharing duties, and the centres organized seminars to disseminate current workplace knowledge. Employees engaged in diverse tasks to facilitate skill and knowledge sharing. This is supported by Kucharska and Erickson (2019), who highlight the importance of IT in knowledge sharing and performance. New developments were communicated through internal memos, and training covered various tasks to ensure information sharing. Huduma centres mentors shared field experiences, and noticeboards were used for knowledge dissemination. The Centres utilized both IT-based and manual channels for knowledge sharing. Oyaro and Ocholla (2020) support these findings, emphasizing the role of knowledge sharing in enhancing performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that facilitating knowledge sharing among employees is crucial for success. By organizing seminars and training sessions, Huduma Centres ensure that employees are well-informed about current processes and developments. This approach not only helps in mitigating knowledge loss but also reduces employee turnover. The use of various communication channels, including internal memos and noticeboards, promotes a culture of continuous learning and information exchange. Therefore, investing in diverse and structured knowledge-sharing mechanisms can lead to improved employee performance and resilience.

6. Recommendations

The study recommends that new developments should be shared through internal memos and employees should be encouraged to learn on the job while carrying out their different roles. Staffs should learn to share out duties. In this regard, the staff should be trained on different tasks under different jobs to gain and share knowledge.

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